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# SAILORS AND SAINTS;

OR,

## MATRIMONIAL MANŒUVRES.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

THE "NAVAL SKETCH BOOK."

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There's life in't.

SHAKSPEARE.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LONDON :

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

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1829.

LONDON :

SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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# SAILORS AND SAINTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

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### CHECK BY DISCOVERY.

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“Round about, round about.”

OLD GLEE.

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ACCORDING to the ‘articles of war,’ established at Camperdown Cottage for fifteen years past, all intrusion on the *siesta* of our old friend was considered, if not absolutely high treason, at least the *crimen læsæ majestatis* and punishable in the next degree.—But the apparent

urgency of the case out-weighed every other consideration in Tiller's opinion, and warranted a departure from the strict line of discipline; and satisfied of the rectitude of his motive, which originated in his anxiety for the honour of the family, he entered, with a little of that *brusquerie* peculiar to a man who feels his own importance, the room where his veteran master lay, courting, by every delicate assiduity, that repose, which, like a coy nymph, is so difficult to be won by the blandishments of age.

“Who the devil's that?” cried Crank, upon Tiller's affecting to stumble as he entered the room.

“It's me, Sir.”

“Me, Sir!—D——n it, I thought 'twas a top-maul coming down by the lump.—What the deuce brings you here at all making such a noise?”

“Noise, Sir?—I never was the man to make a noise about nothing.”

“Nothing, indeed?—when a man's napping!”

“ Ah—Lord bless you, Sir—it’s when a man’s napping, the *mischief’s* done.”

“ You may call it mischief if you like, Mister Thomas—but to me, I can tell you, it’s second nature.”

“ So my Misses says, when she’s skinning the eels.”

“ Well, well—d——n your eels—there, there—that’s quite enough.—Make sail, and leave me to myself.”

“ If *I* doesn’t, Sir—I knows there’s some one else soon will.”

“ Why, what tack’s the fellow on now ?”

“ On what tack, Sir ?—On that tack, that a man may keep his wind, and needn’t bear up for no one; as long as he knows he’s doing his duty.”

“ Holloa !—Holloa !—it seems to me as if you’d hauled your jawing tacks aboard.”

“ I axes your pardon, Sir, I’ve nothing aboard more nor I ought—nor no one can

say, as I ever was the man to make a nitty below, or alarm aloft for nothing."

" Well, no one said you were—there now—shut the door—top your boom—and let's have a little rest."

" Rest?—there's no rest in the matter, Sir,—things 'ave gone too far already," said Tiller, with an unusual degree of warmth, addressing his master.

" Things gone too far already, indeed?—open mutiny, by the Lord.—D——n the fellow, what does he mean?" said the veteran, rising on his elbow, and the blood rushing into his face.—" I tell you what it is, Mister Tiller, if you think to come over me, with any o' your independent pot-house slang, or your long-shore-law, you're d——ably mistaken."

" Law, Sir?—*I'm* no lawyer, Sir—I never sarved me time to the trade o' lying.—Nor you can't say I ever deceived you yet," continued Thomas, fidgetting at his master's wardrobe,

and folding and refolding the veteran's apparel as he carried on the colloquy. "No, nor you can't say that Thomas was ever the man when riding on a lee-shore, expecting every moment to part, to be the first to report a strand gone, when perhaps 'twas no more nor a little o' the rounding chafed in the hawse."

"Well—what of all that?—What the devil has that to say to disturbing a man from his rest, and when you *know* too, it's contrary to orders."

"Was't contrairry to orders, Sir?" said Tiller, who was not to be diverted from his purpose; "was't contrairry to orders 'board the *Boyne*, Sir, to rouze the captain when there were breakers a head, or an enemy in sight?"

"I never said it was—and you know right well, that had the officer o' the watch so far neglected his duty—I'd 'a broke him, aye, though he were son to the First Lord of the Admiralty."

"Very well, Sir," said Thomas, banging the

door of the wardrobe, as if conscious he had now overcome some of the difficulty of broaching this ticklish subject—"very well, Sir—by the same rule o' thumb, if I sees a squall brewing to windward, it's *my* business to report it to my master, napping or not.—Isn't it better to clew-up in time than lose your sticks?"

"Lose your sticks?—Why, damn *it*, are there smugglers on the coast?—Expect the garden to be robbed, eh?"

"No, no, Sir—there's no fear o' that as long as *Ram's* unmuzzled—but I doesn't know how it is," said Thomas, unwillingly drawling out his words,—"I doesn't altogether like the look o' things since this here—this here a ——"

"This here *what?*" cried Crank, who, thinking there was something in the wind, betrayed as much impatience to solve his factotum's meaning as he before did to get rid of his company.

"Why, Sir—this here capering craft—matters seem to be all going the wrong way

since she put into the port—that there *ball* business, and a——”

“Aye, that was all your curs’d, lubberly look-out,” interrupted Crank, alluding for the hundredth and second time, to the accident of upsetting the boat.

“Well, Sir,” said Tiller, not a little piqued at this eternal rebuke—“well, if they got the blind side o’ me then, you shan’t, howsoever, have to say so now.—So if you takes my advice, Sir, you’ll clap on a double look-out to-night.”

Here a mutual pause of some moments ensued. Crank seemed impressed with a confused perception of some imminent danger about to befall him:—Its indistinctness embarrassed him the more:—His agitation kept pace with his awakening curiosity. From a prone position he rolled himself over on the sofa, and raised himself upon his hands, assuming the attitude of a half-roused lion. Then surveying with a

scrutinizing glance his poor minion from head to foot, he caught that solitary eye of his, and fixed it, like a basilisk ; gazing at him for an explanation, with an apprehensive, yet incredulous stare. It was in vain Tiller availed himself of the exclusive power he thus enjoyed over others in the condensation of mental intelligence through an exclusive optic. Even aided by the man's weather-beaten features, no distinct picture was conveyed to Crank's *sensorium* of the description ; or the extent of the danger which his servant seemed fully persuaded awaited him. — Tom shook his head—looked pitiful,—twisted his tail,—squirted his 'bacco juice, despite of another of the articles of war on the floor, and drew forth a long-winded sigh.—At length, finding he had reckoned without his host, in calculating on the expressiveness of his features, he, as if in pity to his master, thus broke silence.—“ The gemman's a nice gemman enough ; and moreover bears a very good

karector aboard—but still, you know, Sir,—there's never no harm in keeping—keeping—a—”

“ Keeping me in suspense, you mean, you blind old blockhead.—What the plague are you at?—Why don't you say what you've to say, like a man ?”

“ I'm coming to it, if you'll let me—all in good time, Sir—no man likes to be ahead of his reck'ning—but it looks to me—(mind, you know, Sir, it's only a *notion* of my own—”)”

“ D—n your notions.—Here, you have been for ten minutes annoying me with an infernal *notion*—working a traverse about a trifle, and a—a —”

“ Well, Sir, if you think light o' the business there's no kashun to overhaul more o' the matter ; but I know,” said Tom, carelessly throwing his tail over his shoulder, “ I shou'n't call a cutting-out job a joke—nor think it a trifle to find some on 'em had tricked us ; and slip't their cables in the night.”

—“Who? what?—d——tion, what d'ye mean?—Surely there's nothing,—nothing happened I hope, eh ?”

“I doesn't *know*, Sir,” said Tiller, with emphasis—“all I know is, when I went my last rounds to pick up the shakings in the drawin'-room—what should I see, but him, down on both marrow-bones, shoving Miss Emily's fist in his mouth, and slobbering it all over like a sucking calf.”

“Who?”

“Why this — Mister Burton, to be sure, Sir.”

“The devil?—D——n the fellow, I thought he was more ashore than he ought.—The sly jade !”

At the first intimation of real danger, Crank had started on his legs, and, aided by the helping hand of Tiller, regained his perpendicularity.—As it was his custom, on occasions of importance, he was observed hitching up the waistband of his smallclothes alternately with one hand or

the other; and having hemmed twice, he prepared to sally forth. Tiller, as usual, fell a few paces in the rear, as the veteran proceeded hobbling along the hall: Crank muttering to himself, with another tuck at his inexpressibles, —“Where could her mother be?”

“Why, bottomizing with Mister Senna in the garden,” voluntarily replied Tom.

“*Bottomizing?*—Devilizing!—fitter for her to look after her daughter.—She’d look rather foolish if she found the painter cut; and the craft adrift.”

Crank had hardly uttered these words, when opening the drawing-room door in no little excitement, he discovered Emily reclining on the sofa as he had left her, and her mother and the lieutenant in conversation, at the further end of the room.

“How d’ye do, Sir.—Why, how’s this?” said the commodore, addressing his sister.—“I thought you were in the garden, bottomizing, as Thomas calls it, with the doctor.”

“ Fie, brother—I only wonder that you can at all tolerate the vulgar phraseology of that illiterate, unbelieving wretch.—He’s a perfect sea bear, Mr. Burton,—an absolute marine monster.”

“ I only wish he heard you calling him a *marine*.—He’d rather be called a *soger* at once.”

Burton and Emily looked at each other as if somewhat relieved by the turn the conversation was taking, from the apprehension that Tiller had communicated the discovery he had so abruptly made.

Mrs. Crank resumed—“ But if you wish to know where I was, I can inform you that I was receiving a most instructive lecture on the medicinal properties of plants; and regret that the lecturer’s professional avocations prevented his remaining to tea.”

Crank had predetermined with Tiller to be calm, and saw the propriety of adopting his advice in not taking the parties suddenly aback.

“ Well, and how long have *you* been here, Mister Burton ?”

“ Why, I should think nearly an hour, Sir, —but Miss Crank was unwilling to disturb your repose.”

“ So was Thomas,” said Crank, sarcastically —“ and what have *you* been up to, Miss Emily ?”

“ I, uncle ?” said Emily, a little confused —“ I’ve—I’ve been too much indisposed—to—to—in fact, do any thing.”

“ Indisposed in one sense, perhaps,” said Crank, somewhat mysteriously.

Determined, however, to investigate the circumstances detailed by Tiller, Crank remained for some moments mute, beating, as it is vulgarly termed, the devil’s tattoo, with his cane on the floor, and revolving in his mind, like a man at his wit’s end, the best mode of communicating with the lieutenant apart, without exciting suspicion in the party.

“ I must get you before you go, Mister Bur-

ton," said Crank, " to step into my room, and see what's the matter with the barometer: it appears to me quite out of order—the quicksilver keeps down in the kelson."

" I shall have great pleasure," said Burton, affecting a composure, which the renewed mysterious hints forbade him to feel.

" Well, then," said Crank, " we may as well overhaul *her* at once."

They both left the drawing-room, and as soon as they had entered Crank's own room, he cautiously bolted the door.

" Now," said he, " we are alone, out o' hail o' the women. —Tell me—you havn't been—been a—(for you must know, I'm one o' your straight-for'ard fellows—hate working Tom Coxe's traverse to come at the truth—(say what I mean—and mean what I say—always come to the point at once—that's my maxim).—Besides, there's no great harm in the thing after all—young men are young men all the world over—so you needn't mince the matter wi' me."

A fit of coughing, fortunately, cut short these ramblings and excursive flights of the veteran's erratic curiosity ; which, with the intention of being condensed into point and terse interrogatory, would, but for this seasonable interruption, have wandered in his present vein, round the pole, and to the other side of the equator, ere it had formed itself into any question, capable of a replication.—The interruption served the purpose of bringing Crank to his recollection, and re-assuring his young friend, who had been justly alarmed by the formal, serious aspect of the old gentleman, in commencing the above series of interrogatories, apologies, innuendos, and disclaimers, all in a breath, and he made up his mind to brave the storm, and avow himself openly as Emily's suitor, by the time the commodore resumed—

“ Curse this cough of mine, it sometimes brings me up with a round turn, when I'm most anxious to speak.—It's not from bad lungs, for I'm as sound-winded, thank God ! as any

boatswain in the fleet,—but it's a sort of a—nervous—d—d tickling in the throat—but a—  
—but tell me—you havn't been—(don't mind me, though *I am* her uncle)—you havn't been—hang it—you havn't been talking soft nonsense to my niece?"

Burton, who by this time was perfectly collected, with great calmness replied—"Although, my dear Sir, you may imagine I have infringed on the privileges of hospitality; and looking at it alone in that light, you may possibly be impressed with an unfavourable opinion—"

"Not at all, my friend, quite the contrary.—Hang it, there wasn't a gayer fellow in the fleet than myself.—Why, Sir, I was a regular fancy man with all the Port-Royal craft, from Black Judy up to Kingston-Kate—so don't be uneasy on that score."

This well-intended, though *outré* confession produced an instantaneous effect on poor Burton's nervous system.—Perhaps not all the

antespasmodics in the whole *materia medica* could so soon have restored his faltering tongue, as he now proceeded; placing his hand on his heart, —“ I’m obliged by your candour ; but I had, I assure you, Sir, predetermined to avow to you, as to an indulgent friend, that from the first moment I beheld your lovely niece, I became enamoured——”

“ Enamoured !—that’s a silly novel-sounding phrase—it carries such a lubberly twang with it.—Can’t you say struck-comical, or smitten from clew to earing—some ship-shape expression.—However, don’t let me interrupt you.”

“ Well, Sir, in candour I must confess, that this evening, for the first time, I have disclosed to her own ear that preference which I feel; and shall always feel, she merits beyond the rest of her sex, both for the charms of her mind and her person.—To the existence of this passion, I think she could not have been previously blind.”

“ Nor Thomas either,”—muttered Crank.

“ Yet, however ardently I may have disclosed my passion, be assured,—my respect for her,—and let me add, Sir, for yourself,—prompted me to make it with the utmost delicacy.”

“ Delicacy!—you and Thomas seem to have very different notions on that head.”

“ Surely, Sir, the man has not presumed to poison your ear with any insinuation derogatory to her, or my honour.”

“ Why, no—he only seemed to think things were going too far—that is to say—you were making tolerable head-way in the business—But tell me, what did the girl say herself?”

“ I must confess, Sir, her answer was dictated by as much discretion as you yourself could have wished.”

“ Discretion?—a crooked word that—if she mentioned it herself, take my word—there’s no *love* in the affair:—when a girl’s thinking of a man, that’s the last thing that comes into her head.”

“ Possibly so—with one of another temperament, and less intellectual than your niece.”

“ Why the girl’s *nowse* enough.—She’s my *own* bringing up.—But, throwing aside all veering and hauling, how did it end ?”

“ In a mere permission to correspond during my absence.”

“ Well, well, there’s nothing in *that*,—I suppose,—in a friendly way.”

“ Pardon me, Sir, I must be sincere ; and once for all, acknowledge that I entertain for her a passion, which time or distance cannot abate—and that all other motives of ambition, whether professional or otherwise, are secondary to that of rendering myself worthy of her hand for life ;—and when I make this avowal of a preference founded on reason and passion, I beg you to remember, Sir, that it is not the avowal of youthful enthusiasm, or of one whose judgment has not been matured by experience.—In a word, Sir,—without her, I feel I shall never be happy.

“ Tut, tut—that’s the old tune.—The first close-reefed taupsle breeze of the Black Rocks,\* will blow it all off.—Believe me, love’s like many other things at sea, very hard to keep in blue-water.—No, no, it’s time enough to think of a wife, after you’ve shipped the other swab, and made prize money enough to pay her mess.”

“ I hope that day is not far distant.”

“ Distant!—There’s no calculating on promotion.—Look at me, Sir,—I was fifteen years buffeting about in a cockpit; and never made a fraction of prize money until I was ten years post.—Suppose any poor girl had waited for me?—God help you!—it’s all a lottery!”

\* Black Rocks—Rocks, situated about five miles off the land, between the port of Brest and Island of Ushant.—They are of the most forbidding, gloomy aspect, scarcely affording a resting-place to the lonely sea-fowl, and are peculiarly exposed to the fury of the elements in hard weather.—A cruize here is prescribed (to use a medical phrase) very much in the nature of a corrective; and officers condemned to a melancholy cruize ‘ off the Black Rocks,’ may sometimes safely attribute it to their being ‘ on the Black List.’

“Perhaps so, without interest; but I flatter myself I possess that which is influential.”

“Have you a cousin at the Board—or is your uncle First Lord of the Admiralty—or are you a Scotchman?”

“No, thank God! Sir, I’m of an old English family—I’m of the Burtons of Glo’stershire.”

“Well, my dear fellow, you may be what you please; but unless you are one of the three I mentioned, you may drop *many* a card at the Admiralty, without being asked up stairs.”\*

Here a vain endeavour was made to open the door.—Immediately after, Tiller announced that “the ladies waited tea.”—Crank suddenly turning on his heel, exclaimed “Coming, coming.”—Then, facing half round to the lieutenant, and holding the handle of the door, he said, in a low tone.—“Come, let’s join ’em—they’ll think we’re plotting mischief.”

\* Crank, if alive in this day, would be agreeably surprised at the facility of access, now afforded officers under such circumstances. Thanks to the Lord High Admiral, and those immediately about him!

Burton, in great perplexity, now seized the old gentleman by the arm—mentioned his probable departure in the morning, and, with many expostulations, endeavoured to obtain some encouragement of his suit from his own lips, well knowing that he could hope for none from Emily's mother.—Moved by this earnestness, and his kindly feeling towards the young man, he swerved a little from the straight path he on all occasions pursued ; and calculating on the improbability of Burton's overcoming the obstacles which he was about to enumerate, he thus partially accepted him as the lover of his niece—

“ Emily, you see, is a showy, fine girl, and much admired about here.—The soldiers come sculking after her : but I'd rather she married a sailor, I confess—Besides, she'll be well off :—but then married people can't live on hope,—I don't mean to slip my wind yet, Mr. Burton.—You understand me ?—So, if she don't get spliced before you're made a commander, and

pocket some prize money, you shall have my consent—that is, if Emily likes, and you continue in the same mind.”

And having thus cautiously clogged his consent, with as many conditions as a dying man would a last will and testament of his freehold, copyhold, and other property, whether real or personal, he betook himself to flight, blowing along the passage like a grampus, and entered the drawing-room with flushed face, and in a state of evident excitement.

Far different was the face, as well as the pace, of his companion ; as he slowly followed him with measured step, anxious eye, and a mind depressed by many forebodings, as to the almost insuperable difficulties which interposed between him and the completion of his sole, overwhelming wish.—By the time he had reached the door, his breathing became short,—his lips parched,—his brain burned,—and his hands became entangled in the inartificial curls of his black hair.—Conscious, how unfit he was

to encounter the keen eye of Mrs. Crank, he stalked past like a ghost ; and endeavoured to compose himself by a few turns in the cool evening air out of doors.

All around was placid and serene.—The air was calm, and the flowers breathed fragrance. The shrill whistle of the blackbird, and deeper melody of the thrush, were interchanged from the opposite shrubberies. The sun was fast descending ; and the high land to the westward had already involved in shadow, a portion of the harbour, where, in the full glare of the reflected sunbeams, lay his home upon the waters ; all ready for sea. Her decks were still in a state of activity, owing perhaps to the wind having come round still more since his leaving her. The boat which had brought him on shore, was now returning to the ship, on board which he distinctly heard three bells struck, with an acute vibration of pain in the head and heart at every stroke, as though it were a parting knell for a cherished friend or loved parent, Nature vin-

dicated that sway which she uncontrolledly exercises at times, as well over the stoutest hearts as feebler spirits: and a gush of scalding brine traced his burning cheeks, and kindly relieved his proud bursting heart.

Strange as it may appear, the tea-party waited in vain for his return, and twenty minutes had elapsed, ere Tiller announced his conviction that he had "cut and run."

"Umph,"—muttered Crank.

"Aye, and there," said Tiller, pointing to the foot of the sofa, "he's forgot his hat in his hurry."

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## CHAPTER II.

## A RUMPUTS.

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What! gone without a word?  
Aye, so true love should do; it cannot speak.

SHAKSPEARE.

Who could believe what strange bugbears,  
Mankind creates itself of fears,  
That spring, like fern, that insect weed,  
Equivocally without seed,  
And have no possible foundation,  
But merely in th' imagination!

HUDIBRAS.

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IT may be readily conceived that the abrupt departure of the lieutenant created no less surprise in the mind of Emily and her mother, than in that of Crank; who stubbornly resolved

to himself to afford no clue to the mystery. From the mode in which he had received the intimation on which he acted, he had every reason to believe Tiller's secrecy might be depended on. Indeed, the old gentleman felt no small gratification in having an opportunity of playing off a little underplot of his own under circumstances which must have strongly excited the feelings and curiosity of the two fair delinquents, who had often kept him in suspense, under similar situations, for days, when one word in explanation would have cleared up the mystery.—And if he had any regret on the subject, it arose from the conviction that the perplexity of the elder lady could not be above a tythe of that felt by her daughter.—It was, nevertheless, observable, that however frequent the allusions made to the strangeness of this incident, Emily was too much occupied in unravelling her own thoughts, to join in the surmises or inferences of one so imperfectly acquainted as her mother with the previous circumstances to which this seemed

obviously to have a reference ; whilst her uncle, with the unbending sturdiness for which he was remarkable, preserved a sullen silence, and left the field open to conjecture.—He was observed at times to rise from his seat and walk a few paces, rubbing his hands together, as persons are wont when satisfied with themselves. The effect produced by this conduct was exactly that contemplated by the captain.—Mrs. Crank's eyes wandered incessantly from her daughter to him, and from him to her daughter ; and she was soon convinced by the anxiety of Emily, whenever she looked (which was but seldom) inquisitively towards the old gentleman, that she herself was at a loss to account for this singular behaviour. Piqued at being foiled by his unusual taciturnity, she returned to the charge again and again, shaping her interrogatories with Protean ingenuity—sometimes as an exclamation—sometimes as an observation—sometimes as a question, and again as an answer.

“ How strange, eh ? ”

“ And so gentlemanly like a man !”

“ But he’s a stranger to us, and it is not to be wondered at !”

“ Persons should not be too indiscriminate in their civilities.”

“ It should be a warning to you, Captain C., how you open your door to people you know nothing about.”

“ Did Thomas really say he saw him go ?”

“ Do you recollect, Captain C. ?”

Finding him imperturbably silent, she, as a *dernier resort*, hastened to adopt the part of respondent to her own questions.

“ No, now *I* recollect, he did not.”

“ I might have spared myself the trouble of asking you.”

During this attempt to extract evidence from an unwilling witness, which, by the bye, might have done honour to legal acumen in the courts of Westminster Hall, she had the mortification to perceive that the witness proved himself more than a match for either Sir Vickery or Garrow,

in their best days, by obstinately ‘standing mute.’ This contempt of court was resented with becoming spirit, and he was accordingly condemned to undergo the *peine dure et forte* in a voluble volley of inculpation and reproach.

“Well, I’m sure, taciturnity seems the order of the day—what may we expect next?—A mere stranger would have more civility—I’m justly punished for so far demeaning myself.—Professional wit, I suppose—can’t comprehend it—perhaps that marine monster, Tiller, might.—But it is beneath my resentment.”

Crank was now perceived rubbing his hands in an excess of delight at witnessing his success in tormenting, whilst a thousand emotions successively assailed the peace and pride of the high spirited invalid on the sofa. To some of the inuendoes contained in her mother’s previous attempt to extract information, she would fain have replied, as they appeared to convey a censure on her own conduct; yet here again she was checked by the dread she entertained of

revealing that to her mother of which she might still be ignorant.—Even to attempt her defence from injurious suspicion, would involve her in a confession which might be perverted to her own prejudice: whilst the doubts which pervaded her mind as to what had transpired in the interview between her uncle and her lover; and, more than all, those arising from the singularity of his sudden disappearance, rendered her situation one of greater perplexity than can well be imagined. In such a situation, she felt it would be most prudent to affect an unconcern she did not feel: but resolved, ere the night was over, to attempt to glean information in an opener and more accessible field.

Meanwhile the fugitive, scarcely conscious of any thing external, had arrived at the beach, and finding that the boat had returned on board, jumped into the first fisherman's skiff which offered, and was soon rowed to the brig. The sentinel and the officer of the watch were both surprised at his appearing uncovered, as he

mounted the side. He, however, waited for no question to be asked, but descending to his cabin, ordered the fisherman to wait.—In the interval between this order and his re-appearance, he had blotted and torn up four or five sheets of paper, ere he could indite an intelligible scrawl; or one which at all seemed to convey his sentiments. He was compelled at length, by repeated messages from the boatman, who begged “the gentleman would hurry, or he wouldn’t save his tide,” to seal and direct that which was less to his mind than any of its mangled predecessors.

“There,” he said, thrusting the letter into the impatient messenger’s hand, “take this to Camperdown Cottage—ask to see the young lady, and deliver it into her own hands—but be particular not to entrust it to that prying old fox with the one eye.—Now, remember, *only* the young lady, and there’s payment for your trouble—quick; be off.”

In due time that evening the fisherman ap-

peared at the cottage, and passed the out-posts, old *Ram*, and the aforesaid prying fox, to whom he refused to communicate his business. Tiller repaired to the drawing-room, where he found Mrs. Crank alone, both Emily and her uncle having retired for the night, and acquainted her that a strange man wished to see her daughter, and refused to say on what errand he came.

Mrs. Crank, who was never slow to suspicion, appeared to hesitate for a moment—an air of thoughtfulness was soon succeeded by a self-satisfied smile—

“ You are certain he’s a stranger ?” said she.

“ Sartain, Ma’am.”

“ Well, then, say nothing of Miss Crank, but send him in—perhaps I may answer as well, since she can’t be seen now.”

The fisherman, after some delay, was ushered into the presence of the lady.—There was but a single chamber-candle in the room, as if the person seated on the sofa was about to retire to

rest, and the lady desired him to say what was his business with her.

With three wipes of his right foot on the green carpet, and a tug of the forelock of hair overhanging his forehead, he appropinquated by slow degrees; whilst his respectful diffidence prevented him from coming right in front of the lady whom he thus accosted—

“ Be you Miss Crank, Ma’am ?”

“ Yes,” whispered the matron.

“ ’Cause if ye bees, Miss,” (with a pause)—  
“ I’ze got zummet for ye from the man-o’-war as  
’ill maike thee aizier, and, moyhap, cure your  
dizorder.”

A slight titter, or suppressed laugh, at this observation, convinced him she was the fair correspondent for whom the letter was destined, and the next minute it was fast clasped in her eager hand.

“ You’ll read un, mayhap ?—and I’ll wait for a token back.”

“ No, no,” said the matron, in a hoarse tone,

which startled him as to her identity—"it requires no answer."

"Why, bless thee heart, thee can't tell by outside any more than I can without looking thee in the face, if you be the roight parzon to open it."

Emily's attendant Martha at this moment entered to say that Miss Crank wished to see her.

"Why, baint *this* Miss?" roared the outwitted waterman.

"Silence, brute!" said the matron, rising with offended dignity, and eyeing him contemptuously; "leave the house, and beware how you come on such errands again, you poor incompetent agent of vice and mischief."

"Dang it—faikens," replied the fellow, "a moight a known it was an old un, by its croke.—Zo I'ze knocked down th' wrong pin, loike a boobie."

As he retreated along the passage, he was encountered by old Tom; who, aware of his mis-

hap, now repaid the fisherman's distrust by tauntingly remarking—

“ So, you scaly raggamuffin, you thought if you stuck your head in the mud like an eel, nobody'd find you out—D——n it, I'm up to your dodge.—You thought you were too deep for a fellow—but it sarves you right,—and I'm glad you're catched in your own net.”

“ Why, dang it—who could trust to thee?— Didn't the gemman zaiy, thee were the worst vrend he'd a got—and cautioned me not to trust to the prying old vox with the blind eye.”

Tiller contented himself with muttering a curse at him for a rascally liar, and bundling him out of doors, to find his way in the dark.— The uncouth, angry confab in the passage, ending in a violent slam of the hall-door, which shook every article of furniture in the cottage, alarmed the owner so much, that his bell was soon in requisition, and Tiller appeared at his bedside.

“ Why, Thomas, what’s all the noise ?”

“ Nothing, Sir,—I know *you’ll* be thinking it nothing,—for so you said afore.”

“ Come, none of your round-about rigs—tell me directly the reason of all that row.”

“ Well, if you must know, Sir, we was boarded in the smoke.”

“ Who ?—how ?—where ?”

“ Mister Burton, Sir.”

“ What, come back at this hour ?”

“ No, Sir,—but a fisherman ”

“ A fisherman ?”

“ Yes, Sir, an enemy.”

“ An enemy ?”

“ Aye, an enemy ; Sir, I told you how it ’ould be.”

“ The devil.—Hand me my pistols—what is he at—where is the villain ?”

“ Bless you, he’s gone, Sir.”

“ And why all this alarm ?—What has Mr. Burton to do with it ?—Explain, scoundrel—explain all, or you shall have the contents of this

in your head," said the irritated veteran; half-levelling a pistol at his favourite.

"Fire!—With all my heart, Sir.—If you'd given a body time, you'd a heard it all.—Now I'm mum,"—and he stood looking calmly at his master, with his arms a-kimbo.

"Provoking rascal!—was ever man so curs'd as I, with a mule-headed swabber, that won't lead or drive."

"Mule-headed swabber!" muttered Thomas.

"Well, come, take your own time—tell me, is there any thing amiss?—Are we all safe now?"

"Damme if I knows, Sir—but here's the misses herself—she knows more o' the matter nor me."

"Close the door, man,"—said Crank—"quick!"—but it was too late: there the lady stood, in the door-way, a letter in hand; and as Tiller ceased, she opened her fire on the veteran.

"Pretty doings!—and you too, at the bottom of them!"

“ Of what, Madam ?—of what ?”

“ Of this letter, Sir, to your niece, and of the whole mystery, as it now appears.”

“ I wrote her no letter—are you all mad ?”

“ Answer for yourself, Sir—can *you* be in your senses, to suffer yourself to be made such a dupe, by a young libertine like him—or encourage these clandestine and shameful proceedings ?—Besides, the letter itself is worse than equivocal—and I am, indeed, to be kept in the dark, am I ?—I’ll leave not a stone unturned to countermine so iniquitous and unholy an alliance against a mother’s peace.”

“ Peace !—I wish you wou’dn’t disturb my peace I know, — this is the second time to-night.”

“ For shame, Sir, to affect to treat the matter lightly—I have his letter !”

“ Whose letter ?”

“ Why, that *parvenue protégée* of yours, Mister Burton !”

“ Burton—why what’s he done ?”

“ *What!*—why written a letter to Emily, which insults her most grossly, and for ever disgraces you.”

“ It’s impossible!—It’s not in his nature—an unassuming, modest——”

“ Very modest, indeed!—Infamous wretch!—But I’ll read the disgraceful letter, and leave it even to this poor heathen here, whether he ought ever to be permitted to enter the doors again.”

“ I doesn’t know that, Ma’am—but as matters stand—a good look-out would be advisable—and I told the captain as much this evening.”

Here Mrs. Crank proceeded to read from the paper in her hand—

“ ‘ *Doubtless, my ever dearest Emily,*’

“ Ever dearest—was there ever such impudence!

“ ‘ *For I cannot bring myself to address you by any other appellative, you must have thought my abrupt departure unaccountably strange.*’

“ Strange, he calls it—I call it, rude and vulgar.

“ *Prudence dictated that it was impossible again to have appeared in your presence, much less to have taken a cold and formal leave of you after what had previously passed.*”

“ Passed!—Indeed things, one would imagine, had come to a pretty pass.—God grant they hav’n’t gone too far!”

“ There it is, Ma’am,” said Tiller,—“ that’s exactly what I says to the captain this evening.”

“ *It was better for both—your uncle knows all.*”

“ Knows all!—what do you know, Sir?—As a parent, I insist on your relieving my suspense.

“ *I confessed every thing—and he bore it better than I could have possibly expected—indeed, he rather encouraged me at last.—He said, he had been gay himself, and thought it was excusable in youth.*”

“ No doubt you bore it philosophically

enough, to be sure.—How could you, with any face, affect to be shocked, after your own licentious admissions?—Encouraged him, too!—Veteran villainy.—Why not let such a monster loose on any other females, than those of your own family?

“ ‘ *Your own discretion will dictate the best time to break it to your mother—though I almost dread the result.*’

“ Unparalleled scoundrel!—this requires no comment.—Just Heavens, what have I lived to witness!

“ ‘ *The inspection of the barometer was only a ruse of the old gentleman to take me to task.*’

“ *That proves you've been a pander to his guilt!*

“ ‘ *So I suppose he means to keep your mother in the dark.*’

“ *Providence be praised, the darkness is dispelled.—‘ He is a light to our feet,’ as the Divine Word assures us, ‘ and a lanthorn to our path.’ ”*

“ No, Ma’am,” said Tiller, “ he came without a lantern, for I bundled him out in the dark.”

“ Ungodly scoffer, peace !

“ ‘ *I have his permission to write.*’

“ But he’s not got mine.

“ ‘ *Which I shall most gladly embrace at every favourable opportunity.--Until that happy day, which again restores me to the only society I shall ever prize ; believe that an attachment for you which no pen can describe--no other heart can conceive, animates every thought of him, who delights to subscribe himself,*

“ ‘ *Your devoted*

“ ‘ **FREDERICK BURTON.**’

“ Oh, aye—there’s the ardour as usual—just concludes like every other artful and seductive pen—but it shall rest with me to cut up the connexion by the roots.—I’ll make it my study, night and day, to defeat such infamous intrigues, which I’m astonished you should be detected in, without blushing for your own shame and depravity.”

During the reading of the letter, and the paraphrase thereon, Tiller appeared to sympathize in all the mother's feelings ; and was observed, when completely silent, to accompany every forcible expression or epithet that escaped her lips, with a corresponding wave of the hand, an oscillation of the body, or a vigorous flourish of his arm : much after the manner of those dumb duplicate actors on the Roman stage, whose duty, we are told, it was to accompany the recitation of the principal performer by appropriate action and gesticulation.

Crank remained perfectly quiet, until the enraged matron arrived at the climax of her passion, when she appeared lost in a reverie of prayer, or possibly malediction.

“ Heave the letter here,” cried Crank,—“ let me read it without any of your d——d sermonizing nonsense.—It appears to me, you’ve mistaken the telegraph altogether.—’Fore God !— She’s turned it end for end.”

Having perused it, with the aid of his spectacles, he flung it into the middle of the floor,

exclaiming—"It's all right—upright and manly,"—and then addressing his sister, said—"Don't you now be railing at Emily in her present state—it 'ill all blow over—and I told the young man so himself."

Seizing the letter, and darting at Crank, as he folded himself with perfect composure in the bed-clothes, a glance of indignation from those eyes of fire, which would have shaken the nerves of any man less susceptible of fear than himself, she retreated to her own room, to vent her spleen alone.

As it has been said, that a husband is, of all men in the world, the last man to know his own disgrace, so poor Emily, in this instance, was destined to be calumniated, and her character traduced, whilst she reposed her innocent head on a pillow, which as yet, nor knew—nor merited a thorn.

Wearied out by the agitation of her own thoughts in consequence of the occurrences already detailed, and in the vain endeavour to

reconcile the inconsistencies of Burton's conduct, she had fallen asleep too soundly to be disturbed by the noise around; and, as is the case with girls in her situation, she had so effectually courted Somnus, that the good-natured god had brought the penitent offender to her feet, to clear up the whole mystery, and render her slumber as happy, as it was refreshing.

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## CHAPTER III.

## PARTING CO.

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He stood, and gazing from the stern,  
Beheld his native Spain receding far :  
First partings form a lesson hard to learn,  
Even nations feel this when they go to war ;  
There is a sort of unexpressed concern,  
A kind of shock that sets one's heart ajar :  
At leaving even the most unpleasant people,  
And places ; one keeps looking at the steeple.

BYRON.

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No people have greater reason to deplore the fickleness of mortals in point of faith, than persons circumstanced like ourselves : or to run the risk of being thought heterodox, to lament that Religion is as liable to change and altera-

tion as Fashion itself.—But for this circumstance, we should have had it in our power to adopt the glowing style of the Heathen Mythology, and acquaint the reader; that scarcely had Aurora begun to blush for the consequences of her fond dalliance with the golden-haired God, and he himself fled from her embraces to yoke his fiery steeds, and mount the empirium, than the sons of Neptune were roused as effectually as if by the conc of the Tritons:—Or in other words, the Jolly *Jacks* of the *Spitfire* were rous'd out from deep sleep by the shrill pipe of Bob Brace, boatswain of the said brig—and ere the first yellow streak of light had faintly marked the orient verge of Heaven, as the coursers of the sun pawed and plunged to break their confinement, and scour the fields of æther; the anchor was weighed, and the ship, under a crowd of canvas, with a light wind from the north-east, was fast clearing the port.

Burton, it will be imagined, was not one of the

last, to quit a fallacious dream for dull reality, and indulge in a parting glimpse at a scene endeared to him by the most animating recollections.

During the period occupied by the ship's company and officers at breakfast, although not regularly his watch, Burton volunteered 'to take charge of the deck.'—In so doing, he was as much actuated by a wish to be alone, and escape the observations likely to be made on his singular conduct the night before, as to afford himself an opportunity of now and then catching by stealth, a wistful glance at that central spot of earth, which had so suddenly absorbed all his thoughts and wishes.—He was observed by the quarter-master and mate of the watch, on one of the after carronades, leaning over the hammocks, and directing his attention, with very little intermission, to that part of the shore, on which was still discernible the eminence topped by Camperdown Cottage.—As the distance increased, his glass was called to his

aid, and now and again he withdrew his intent gaze from the distant scenery, to apply his pencil to a small memorandum-book which lay beside him, as though noting down the land-marks and bearings of the coast.—In this occupation, no suspicions were excited in the minds of the sailors stationed at the different haliards, who had before that seen him often similarly engaged when entering or leaving port. And it must be confessed, that neither the great circumnavigator Cook, of early celebrity, nor any of the best hydrographers of the day, ever felt deeper interest, or paid greater attention to a survey, than poor Burton upon this occasion.—The most minute alterations in aspect or position, as the cottage receded from his view, were accurately ‘timed,’ as it is termed: each window as successively *shut in* by other objects, (and by the bye, he was very intently occupied in vainly wishing some one of them would open,) was minutely noted.—When the body of the building had altogether disappeared, the

chimney-tops, and even 'the smoke which so gracefully curl'd,' as the poet hath it, announcing that Mistress Tiller's culinary labours had begun, and that Tom's coppers were heated for breakfast. Every trifling circumstance appeared to his strained eye an object of considerable interest.

Burton's soliloquizing was destined to be disturbed by intruders, who participated in none of his present feelings.—The officers having breakfasted, some returned upon deck.—The master was the first to accost the lieutenant—

“Come, Burton,”—said the blunt north-countryman,—“come, I'll look out—bear a han doon to your breakfast, or you'll come in for monkey's allowance.”

“I want no breakfast,” briefly replied Burton—

“Luckily for you, my boy,” returned Stowel, “for the idlers\* have been swaying away on all top-ropes with the soft-tack, and the purser has razéed the round o' beef down to the floor-

\* Surgeon, Purser, &c. &c.

futtocks of the dish.—Well!—is she all trimmed?”

“ Yes, I believe so,” said Burton, looking aloft, for the first time since the people went to breakfast—“ perhaps the main-yard’s rather fine—but, you know, we mus’n’t disturb the men from their meals.”

“ Why, Quarter-master,” said Stowel, with surprise, and looking at the binnacle—“ how’s this?—You’re a couple o’ points to wind’ard o’ your course.”

“ The leaftenant told me to haul her up, Sir.”

“ No wonder the main-yard’s rather *fine*,” said Stowel, sarcastically.

“ Yes,” said Burton, “ I desired him.—I was anxious to keep the a—to keep the—cot—that is, the harbour’s mouth, open to a—”

“ ‘Gad, I wish you a—kept your own shoot, and said nought aboot it.—You’d look rather blue, if by altering the course, the brig came boomp on a rock !”

“ Rock ! Stuff!—I suppose,” said Burton, “ we know the coast just as well as you, Mister Soundings.”

“ Know the coast—the de'il thank you—you've had your run of it o' late.—Weell, ha' ye any observations that will do for my remark-book ?\*—If you have, let me overhaul 'em, they may sarve a body wi' the Big Wigs at Soomerset Hoose.”

“ Why, just before,” said Burton, “ we shut the cottage in—”

“ Shoot in !” said the master, “ aye, I think *you're* shoot *oot* there for a spell,” and turning on his heel, he left him to conjecture what might be implied by an observation which seemed to have a reference to last evening's transactions, of which no one on board could,

\* Masters in the Navy, by a judicious regulation of the Navy Board, at Somerset House, are required to make a return of every thing remarkable they may observe, in the different ports they visit, in the course of a cruize.—A practice which materially contributes to the acquirement of correct information as to both Geography and Hydrography.

he thought, be cognizant but himself.—Here the first lieutenant appeared on deck, and in a somewhat similar strain, expressed his surprise, that he had not yet repaired to the gun-room—

“ I’m afraid you’re ill, if you can’t eat your allowance.—I’ve often heard, that a man in love has no more stomach than an ostrich.”

A youngster of an ‘*Academite*,’ as the pupils of the Royal Naval Academy at Portsmouth are nick-named, remarked with a laugh, the simile was a strange one; for, said he, “ I’ve read in natural history, that he’s an oviparous *brute*, and when he’s hard up for prog, can digest an iron crow-bar on a pinch.”

Burton, after enduring the taunts of his companions, on his loss of appetite and unusual dejection of spirits, for some time with philosophic *nonchalance*, found the fire of these wags waxing too hot for him. The young catechist of the academy, presuming upon his being rather a favourite with him, remarking, “ now,

I'm afraid, Mr. Burton, you're attacked with jealousy, or the jaundice, for I'm sure there's something yellow in your eye," the seniors of the party set up a laugh at the youngster's drollery; and the lieutenant was fain to abandon the field to the witling, and retired to his cabin without condescending a reply.

From musing on his change of situation, he began to think with himself, how he could render it more tolerable, and the first thing which occurred, as a palliative to the pains of absence, was to provide something as a substitute, which might represent his *inamorata* to the senses.—To see—to feel—any thing which bore her impress or resemblance, must, he thought, tend to tranquillize his agitated feelings; he therefore determined, whilst the traces of her beauty were fresh in his recollection to transmit them to some firmer medium of memory, than the medullary membrane of the brain, where it was very possible the activity of the mind might wear them out, or

render the outline ill-defined, or its colouring confused to the imagination.—He, therefore, resolved to attempt her portrait, from recollection, whilst the latter was vivid; nor was he without other resources, whereby he expected to beguile the tedious hours of protracted absence.—He formed to himself a project, for keeping a journal or personal narrative of his feelings, and the state of his heart: rather than (as it is too much the custom with published narratives in the present day,) of the excellent breakfasts eaten here, and bad dinners there, by the intelligent narrator, for the benefit of future generations.—On this he also resolved to set to work immediately, and open by a description of the effect produced on his sensibilities in the morning whilst observing the features of the harbour, and looking his last on its beautiful scenery.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CRUIZE.

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On deck, beneath the shading canvas spread,  
Rodmond a rueful tale of wonders read,  
Of dragons roaring on the enchanted coast,  
The hideous goblin, and the yelling ghost.

FALCONER.

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THE state of mind engendered by a long continued cruize, on a lone station, without change of locality or incident to enliven the dull sameness of prescribed duty, will be appreciated in some degree by those who have performed what is termed a voyage by sea. By this term, we are not to be understood, as meaning a drenching in a Berwick smack, or a smoking in

a Scotch steamer from Leith to London:—though be it always recollected—“*Salvâ reverentiâ Scientiæ*”—that notwithstanding all our strong professional predilections, and the lover-like devotion with which we, as it were, idolize a square-rigged ship as a beautiful being, instinct with life, perception, and volition; we are none of those, who would throw stumbling blocks in the way of the ‘march of infant intellect,’ much less, presume to speak disparagingly of smoke or smoke-jacks, however hideous or unsightly they must appear to an eye accustomed to detect and linger over the excelling beauties discoverable by the nautical critic in a British man-of-war.—Possibly we may be told this is childish, or at least unphilosophical; but satisfied we are, that ere, perhaps, a very few months are over, there will be found to sympathize with ourselves, another class of our countrymen, and that by far the most numerous, whose predilections are destined to suffer as great a shock as our own, in con-

sequence of the substitution of the stern agency of iron and machinery, for sinews and animal labour.—This observation is meant to apply to that class of men, who (inheriting from their ancestors, like the Arab of the Desert, a passionate attachment for, and cherishing with a sort of family pride, the parchment which records the purity of the racer's blood, and his noble descent for ages, from sires of high renown) are doomed ere long to witness a similar revolution in the history, and an equal depreciation of the hitherto almost measureless value and unsullied ancestral pretensions of that noble animal, erst, our nation's pride.

The voyager who, peradventure, hath crossed the wild Atlantic, passed either tropic, or doubled either of the great southern capes of Africa or America, may not be inaptly compared, however unconscious he may be of the resemblance, to a barometer.—Indeed, on examination, he will find his feelings, and, it may be added, his very faculties, are as com-

pletely under the influence of the elements, as the bark itself, in which he ‘braves the breeze,’ or buffets the billow. So long as swiftly impelled, though with a steady impetus, and little or no uneasy motion, the ship continues to fly through the water, with a ‘flowing sheet,’\* that is to say, with that sort of steady, favourable breeze, which may be said to set themselves and their ‘sails asleep,’ all is serenity and sunshine afloat.—Every countenance, however dark or tawny, not excepting even that of the black cook Pompey, at the ‘cabouse,’ indicates *fair*.

\* Our repugnance to ‘lubberly’ phrases here, prevents us quoting a passage, from what the critics *judiciously* term ‘the *Mariner’s beautiful* song,’ wherein the author sings of a “*Wet sheet, and a flowing sea!*”—Puling nonsense.—Doubtless the author somewhere heard of a ‘*flowing sheet*, and a following sea,’ and has thus confused the real reading with his metrical meaning.—A tar of Tom Tiller’s stamp would fancy the phrase meant—‘A wet *night*, and a flowing *can*.’—A ship is said to have a ‘*flowing sheet*,’ when the wind crosses the line of her course at right angles, that is to say, a ship steering *south*, with the wind at *west*, has a flowing sheet; for if she were ‘close hauled,’ she would lie two points nearer to the wind—viz.—*S.S. W.*

But let the breeze become light or variable—let it, with characteristic fickleness, veer about, or ‘flicker in flaws,’ what restless anxiety pervades every feature ! what fluctuations between hope and fear usurp alternate dominion in every bosom on board ! To follow up the metaphor still further : should the breeze draw round to a quarter adverse to their course, the clouds lower, or sky look threatening, how, like the metal in the barometer, sinks, by marked and perceptible gradations, the inercurial spirit of the man, as the wind chops round, and stares him in the face like a refractory tandem-leader, or the weather becomes worse : whilst those unhappy beings of the sombre and saturnine cast, become yet more intensely silent, sullen, and morose, until they are again relieved from a state bordering on despondency, by a favourable wind and fair weather.

Far different are the objects which give pleasure, the motives which actuate, and the anticipations which invoke and challenge the daring

spirit of the vigilant cruizer.—Little cares, or recks he, whether the blue surface of the unfathomed deep be softly ruffled by the sultry southern breeze, or the upturned bosom of the ocean be widely agitated by Boreas' bitter blast, provided the fickle element favours him in chase, or spares him those spars for whose safety he is as solicitous as the sweeping falcon for the wings which whirl him irresistibly on his prey.

Not that a cruize *per se*, or unconnected with its probable ultimate consequences, can be considered quite so agreeable a party of pleasure, when, perhaps, ‘the sun disdains to shine’ for days—the stars, too, neglect to light up their beacon fires to assist the doubtful steersman during the lonely mid-watch—or the uncertain moon refuses to lend her light for weeks together.—For two-thirds of the cruize, perhaps you are buried under water, with hatches battened down—your ears stunned with the unceasing noise of creaking bulkheads—your nose assailed with the

foul effluvia of the *fresh* water ('name it not, ye chaste stars'), which your thirst compels you to strain through your set-teeth; whilst keen, uncompromising hunger makes you murder by mouthfuls the white-bodied, black-headed, '*bargemen*,' that breed and swarm in the dusty biscuit.—Little would it boot us here to describe the yearnings of a young stomach even for this hard fare, or attempt to entice, in idea, the dandy yachtman who resigns himself each summer to 'ruff it along the coast on a rump-steak and a bottle of Port,' to make one of the cock-pit dinner party; and partake of the aldermanic feast which we have seen every day, of every year provided from the never failing dish of a fat 'double-piece of pork,'—or a lean joint of hard 'salt junk,' of mahogany hue.—Nor do we imagine that any lady, however nautically, or naughtily, disposed to brave the dangers of the deep, 'sighing for love,' as her *inamorato* must be presumed to be 'for glory,' is likely to be 'ticed away from her mamma by the ante-

past (if her imagination be strong enough to realize the idea) of a comfortless cup of cold pea coffee, sweetened with treacle; which is the sailor's only substitute for that nerve-twitching, vapour-engendering, sleep-banishing beverage of our modern females, Hyson tea.

Always excepting the present day, consecrated by even the working classes to the cultivation of the most abstruse science: and also excepting all places sanctified by the presence of a Mechanic's Institute, of a Lecturer, or even a Sub-director of the 'March of Intellect,' it must be admitted that there is no other time or place so well calculated as a noviciate at sea to inculcate morality—mend asperity of manners—cure self-sufficiency, or bring young puppies, or old women, of either sex, so completely to their bearings as pending a cruize of this nature.—Two or three months spent in tossing about in the Atlantic would do more towards regenerating a man, and banishing unsocial propensities, or offensive peculiarities, than perhaps

all the books that ever were written on the subject of Ethics.—As this school of reform escaped the notice of Chesterfield, it is to be hoped that his next editors will admit in their preface that this nobleman was a perfect ignoramus.—Nor was that chimney-sweeper at all out in his reckoning who threatened his only son, whom he was bringing up to the *profession*, that unless an immediate amendment was observable in his conduct and demeanour, he would make a *midshipman* of him, and send him to sea to learn manners.—This moralist, though not himself insensible to ‘climbing ambition,’ corrected it with discretion, and must be presumed to have known something of nauticals as well as of nature.—How unlike the probable critics of these pages !

So much for the philosophy of the profession !

#### DEPARTURE.

The day of their departure was fine, and with a favourable breeze, and exactly such as the

adventurers could have desired in all respects but one ; namely, that it happened to be Friday —a day of omen dire to the superstitious seamen.—Yet, though the sky was clear, and the wind propitious, the prospect of returning to their former cruizing station, which had hitherto been very unproductive, seemed to throw a damp on the buoyancy of spirit, which is so generally observable in a crew when starting afresh for sea.

Had Burton remained on deck, or within hail of their raillery, he might have served his mess-mates in good stead in the dearth of other amusements ; but that officer, from the specimen which he had had in the morning of a very general disposition to be merry at his expense, resolved to yield to the storm, rather than subject himself to the alternative of resenting that mirth which might unfortunately assume the aspect of impertinence. —In fact, he was a laughter-loving soul himself ; and, under any other circumstances, had he even been its object, would rather have

promoted than repressed a joke. But, it will be recollected, that this was not the sole reason for his retiring to his cabin, where he had already availed himself of the assistance of the run-away book-binder's apprentice to provide himself with a neat half bound volume of foolscap, doubled, so as to be portable; which was to be set apart for collecting and recording a detail of the occurrences on the cruize: or, to speak with a stricter adherence to truth, intended to be the depository of those secret reflections, those anxieties and forebodings, which he felt would be his lot until his return.

In fact, had he allowed the youth to have exemplified his art in gilding and lettering the volume, the lad, who had, in common with many heard whispered the state of his employer's heart, and was a wag in his way, would not have hesitated to have emblazoned on its back the happily alliterative title "*Love Log.*"

The first page had, before the captain's steward knocked at his door, been embellished

by a slight sketch of a certain young lady ; and the portrait was only laid aside in kit-cat, to prepare himself for dining, by invitation, with his captain : who kindly afforded him this opportunity of avoiding the necessity of incurring the *badimage* and banter of the gun-room gentry.

In pursuance of Staunch's good-natured plan, he detained his guest rather longer than was his custom after dinner ; and, without ever intending to satisfy the reader as to the source from whence we derived this information, we are assured that the conversation insensibly turned upon a subject which naturally must have excited the curiosity of the captain ; and proved, considering the confidential terms on which they were, not an unacceptable opportunity to Burton for disclosing his mind.

“ Fill up your glass, Burton, and I'll give you a toast,” said the captain—“ though, you dog, you hardly deserve it at my hands, considering the jealous care you took to conceal your fair Rosamond from my sight.”

Burton blushed, conscious of what was about to follow: possibly the tint on his cheek was a little deeper from recollecting there was something disingenuous in that part of his conduct.

The wine was already sparkling in the glass to the brim, when Staunch raised it to his lips, exclaiming—"I'll give you the Emily of Dartmouth—may you soon be her commander."

"Thank you—thank you, Sir, for your kindness.—I wish I could cherish a hope."

"D——n it, don't be down-hearted, man—'a faint heart never won fair lady.'—She's a prize worth having—a nicer craft you couldn't wish to handle—besides, she's a freight worth venturing for—doubloons and ingots."

"Ah, Sir," said the lieutenant, with a sigh, "I would I were her owner."

"What's to prevent it, man?—You've a claim of salvage.—Recollect, man, I nearly expended my second lieutenant on her."

"I fear I shall live, Sir, to wish that happy

moment when I snatched her from death had been my last."

"Phoo ! phoo ! that wish will be better timed after you are spliced awhile, and you have tasted the miseries of matrimony."

"With such an angelic creature, I feel that would be impossible."

"Bravo, my *preux chevalier*!—I thought so once with the poor lost mother of my own fine boys; but I have known what a matrimonial squall is, too, when long in port."

"That, from you, I confess surprises me, except it be a *façon de parler*—for I had considered you another proof that naval men uniformly make the truest husbands and fondest fathers."

"Granted: and believe me half the sentiment in the song—

' In every mess they find a friend,  
In every port a wife,'

is a flagrant libel on the profession—though

poor Dibdin, I think 'twas he, was a friend who meant us well."

" If it be true at all, it can only be applicable to the lower order, and unthinking class of our sailors."

" Avast there, Burton—my experience is longer than your's.—Do they ever neglect their allotments to their wives?—and you'll acknowledge the privations of many of these fine fellows are severe.—I suppose you've won the girl, of course:—but have you weathered on the mother?"

Here Burton shook his head.

" Oh, there you're taken aback—well, how does the old boy look up?"

" Ah, Sir, I'm afraid he looks down; for you know he sets great store by the girl, and talks of her perfections as if he were as much in love with her as I am."

" Well, but if it comes to the worst—suppose you were to make a cutting-out work of

it? I dare say the girl herself wouldn't give the alarm."

Whilst musing on the proposal which, probably, had he reason to calculate on his mistress's encouragement, would have been, long ere this, put into execution, the current of his thoughts was interrupted by the drum beating to quarters on deck.—Be not alarmed, 'gentle reader!' this is no prelude to uproar, violence, or the din of battle; but, on the contrary, a custom invariably enforced on board ships of war long before our time, to ensure security to his majesty's vessels; and propriety and sobriety amongst their crews. At this signal it is usual for the men to repair to their quarters and pass muster; here they, and the guns, are examined to see that every thing is in readiness lest they might be surprised in the night; as well as to discover how far they have complied with those strict and salutary regulations in the service relative to the enforcement of sobriety.

Indeed, so strictly has this regulation been carried into effect by some officers, that we have known the whole crew to have been obliged to pass in review before the commander; and if the slightest symptom of presumed inebriety were observable, the delinquent, as his only chance of escape, was compelled to 'walk the plank' (not, *à la* pirate, into the sea); but in sober truth to find his way from one end of a plank in the deck to the other, without daring to entrench on the black line caulking on either side: a difficulty which a *sober* landsman would find insuperable, whilst disturbed in his equilibrium by the rolling motion of the ship; whereas *Jack* has sometimes been known to triumph in this species of ordeal, albeit half seas over.

Aware of the punctual attendance of his captain upon those occasions, who perhaps was as anxious to display his moderation at table, or to prove, in fact, that he was as competent, as the best, to walk a plank, if required; the lieutenant

rose to retire, and accompanied the commander on deck.

From the press of sail carried throughout the day, the brig had made considerable progress, and performed nearly two-thirds of the distance towards her destined cruizing ground ; southwest of Scilly.—As it is frequently found to occur with easterly winds, the breeze lulled with the setting sun, and before dark nearly died away. The night was soft and beautifully serene—the moon shone brightly, and silvered the surface of the gently undulating sea—the lower sails were flapping against the masts, whilst the lighter canvas aloft occasionally caught the resuscitating breath of the upper current of air, which was scarcely sufficient to keep steerage way on the vessel.

The hammocks had been piped down ; and Burton, whose watch it was, now relieved Hasty of his charge.

“ There you have her, my boy—fine night

for the idlers and fair weather birds.—But mind, if a breeze should spring up, don't be singing out to man your 'Camperdown,' for the 'royal' clewlines, or your 'Crank's' for the studding-sail down-hauls," said Hasty, darting down the ladder without affording an opportunity for a retort from Burton, had he been in the vein.—After walking the deck for two hours, as was his custom during the 'first watch,' the captain bade the lieutenant good night, and retired to rest. The order book, which was to apprise him of the captain's intention in the event of any change of wind or weather during the night, was put into his hand by the steward, and he was left to pace the deck alone.

The tranquil character of the scene, the soft balmy breath of the night, and the solitary aspect of her comparatively deserted deck, together with the stillness of repose which pervaded every quarter of the ship, but now and then interrupted by the creaking of the jaws of the gaff against the mast, all proved insufficient to restore

our lieutenant to the equal tenor of his mind.—His step was irregular—he occasionally apostrophized himself,—and again his mistress. With arms folded, and head bent downward, he wound his devious way, regardless of the obstacles which presented themselves on the deck, and was only roused from a soliloquy on the difficulties of his situation by tumbling over one of the carronade slides, which obstinately refused to give place to the vigorous assault of his shin-bone.—Recalled to his recollection by the pain resulting from this accident, his attention was soon arrested by a group on the forecastle ; who, availing themselves of the fineness of the weather, and in the full presumption that during the remainder of their watch there would be nothing to do in the way of trimming or altering the position of the sails, had imperceptibly been attracted together, like children round a nurse gifted with mystic lore and fairy legend, in the hope of being amused with a tale from a seaman, whose talents at description, and adroit-

ness in nautical metaphor, had procured him the distinguishing appellation of “*Twisting Tom*,” and established his pre-eminence over every man in the ship in spinning, as it is termed by sailors,

## A YARN.

“COME, Tom,” said a topman who had just been relieved from the wheel—“ come, tip us a twist—one o’ your thoro’-bred starers, you know.”

“Well ! well !” says Tom, who was never at a loss for ‘a yarn,’—“ will’s the word, and you’ll weather the worst—so off she goes—rap-full and she flies—

“Well, you must first of all know, as soon as I was out o’ my time, and gets clear o’ the chap I was bound to (for, you see, he’d a double-walled colt in his fist from morn till night), I ships in the *Sarah*, at Bristol—outer-

bound for Jamakee.—She was one o' your deep-waisted craft as was rose on ; and always risked the run for a market.

“ Well, we sailed on a Valentine’s day, what unfortunly fell on a Friday.—We’d a stock o’ live-lumber aboard, as crammed every chink in the cabin.—Let’s see—there was a couple o’ your West-Ingee planters ;—one, a good sort of fellow enough, for he’d always at hand a throat-seizing\* or so, for the man at the helm—but to’ther was a reg’lar built Pyawe—a platter-faced chap, with more jaw nor a jay in a calm ; but come on a breeze, and he’d dive like a duck.—Then we’d a curnel of one o’ your Quamino rigemens—an old ball-headed buffer, with an eye like a firrit, and a nose, aye, as ’ou’d fairly strike fire like a flint.—Heave the log when you would, he’d freshen his nip—for ’twas all one to him which went the fastest, the ship or the bottle.—Then we’d his wife—a wizend-old hag,

\* In this sense, applied as a glass of grog.

more hog'd\* in the back nor the *Billy*† herself—She'd a wort on her cheek as big as a top-mast-stay-mouse—and her hide altogether was as tough and as tanned as the top of a gaff-taucle boot.—Then she'd a daughter; the dientical build as herself, but rather more bluff in the bows, and flat on the floor—A niece, too—one o' your creole-built craft, with a counter as clean as a clipper, and just as much breadth on the beam as to make her stand up to her sticks:—and, to clinch the concarn, we'd a crazy old craft, as they used to call nurse; more shrivelled in the face nor a fisherman's fingers—'sides a two-fisted *she-sarvant-maid*, as could wap any chap in the ship.

“ Well, you know, as soon as the mop was put out o' commission,‡ and we crosses the line, and gets in the trades—there was tarn the tables —for, 'stead of grunting and groaning below,

\* Nautice—broken backed.

† The Royal William, many years guard ship at Spithead.

‡ Sea-sickness over.

there was nothing but dining, and dancing, and Bobs-a-dying on deck from daylight till dark.—There was the goggle-eyed daughter a blowing the Grampus\* with the platter-faced planter, whenever he caulked upon deck;†—whilst t'other, you know,—the good natured chap, was chasing the creole from stem to stern, and running all sorts o' rigs to weather her wake.—Well, then, we'd Sangaree-Jack, as we called him, as was either swigging away, or practiceing his pops at a mark—whilst his wizen-old-wife, was axing more questions about the course, and compass, and wind, and weather, and what-not, in a watch, nor would fill a battle-ship's log in a twelve-month:—for, you see, she was one o' your long-headed hags— one o' your larned, you know: why, bless your heart, she'd make you believe an eel was a reg'lar-built serpent, and a crab nothing more nor a spider—and as for your speriments; salt-water-

\* A practical joke—throwing a bucket of water upon a person when sleeping on deck.

† Sleeping upon deck.

Jack was a fool to her.—Why the first-mate used to swear—one Moore, a young fellow from Shields—the best tempered chap in the world—he'd work a craft through the eye of a needle—well, *he* used to swear—aye, often and often,—she'd still rum out o' backy, or bring a red-herring to life when she liked.

“ Well, howsomever, we'd this sort o' work for more nor a week—when—let's see—’twas exactly the 20th of March; aye, the 20th o' March (for I'll mind it as long as I live), when just as the skipper was shooting the sun,\* and the ship no more, by our reck'ning, nor fifty-four leagues from the land, (the north-end o' Jamakee, you know,) who should come aft but old Sangaree-Jack, with a gun in his fist (for, you see, we'd a bit of a breeze at the time), to slap at a couple o' Carey's† as was dodging about; and dipping their wings in the wake o' the ship, the most o' the morn.—Well, as soon as we seed

\* Shooting the sun—taking an observation.

† Mother Carey's chickens.

what old bald-head was up to ; aft flies the skipper, forgetting the sun, and singing out like a soger—‘ Stand-fast your fire—stand fast, you infarnal old fool !’—(for the skipper, you see, was one o’ your reg’lar-built, upright-down-right chaps, as never cared nothing for no one,) —‘ D’ye know *what* you’re a-doing, you lubberly lobster,’ says he,—d’ye know what you’re a-doing ?’ ‘ Doing ?’ says Sangaree-Jack, ‘ *you’ll* see,’ says he, ‘ in a crack ;’ when slap he fires, and *unfortun’ly* brings down the nearest bird !

“ Well, a child might ’ave levelled the skipper !—I never seed such a change in a man. He tarned for awhile as pale as a sheet ; and it wasn’t that he wanted for pluck,—for you see, as soon as he came to himself a bit,—if it hadn’t been for the mate, he’d-a made the old buffer jump overboard—aye, and moreover, he floored one of the planters, for ’tempting to take the part of the soger.—But the worst was, the way they made *light* o’ the matter.—‘ Why don’t you lower down the boat,’ says Sangaree-Jack,

as unconcerned, aye, as a judge passing sentence o' death.—‘ Why, don’t you pick up the bird,’ says he.—‘ Pick up the devil!’ says Bob, ‘ what an’t you already done *mischief* enough?—It would sarve ye,’ says Bob, ‘ no more nor you ought to be sarv’d; to tarn to, and tar-and-feather you, and tow you astarn on a grating for the rest o’ the flock to feed on your ricketty carcass.’—‘ So it *would*,’ says the skipper.—‘ But never mind, Mister Moore,’ says he,—‘ clap it *all* in the log.—They shall *know* it at Lloyd’s! and I’m d——d!’ says he, shaking his fist at the soger; ‘ but if any thing happens to the ship, I’ll bring it all on your lubberly back!—and what’s more—the underwriters shall stop it out o’ your pay.’

“ Well, you know, there was the devil to pay and no pitch hot—for the women, you see, must put in their oar.—There was the old-un, begging and praying to come to no words; as *she* was the cause on it all.—‘ ’Twas *I*,’ says she, ‘ as a axed the curnel, to kill me the bird to

stuff.'—‘Stuff h——,’ says the skipper,—‘an’t you *stuffing* your body from morn till night?’—‘*My* body? ye monster!’ says she, (for I minds every word, just as well as I hard it this minute)—‘Why, ye brute,’ says she, ‘twas the *bird’s* as I wanted to stuff;—for you see, she was in one o’ your speriment fits the whole o’ the morn.

“Well, you know, after a breeze,—in course there comes a bit of a lull—still, there were more black, nor bright looks on deck, the most o’ the day.—The skipper wouldn’t dine in the cabin—no, not he, nor break biscuit; nor drink a drop the whole a’ternoon.—No one could get him below—there he walked the deck, passing the passengers on opposite tacks.—Sometimes speaking to himself—sometimes biting his nails, sometimes taking the quid out of his mouth, and heaving it far to leeward, like a man as was vexed.—Then he’d slap his thigh, or clinch his fist:—again he’d look to wind’ard, and shake his head—then look aloft, and drop it again

with his eyes fairly rivetted into the deck.—There wasn't a man in the ship but thought he was mazed.

“ Though we'd a fine breeze, with every thing on her, low and aloft ; I'm blessed, afore dark, if he didn't shorten-sail to close-reefed-tauchles and foresail ; and only for Bob Moore, I'm sartain he'd a sent down the yards, and struck the to'gallant-masts.

“ Well, there we were, with a fair wind, and as fine a night as ever was seed on the seas,—going away large, not shewing as much canvas as would kiver the ship's company's hats.—All night long the skipper stays upon deck.—D—n the bit, till daylight, he'd budge below.—Then when he see'd the sun rise, shining as bright as doubleloon out o' the mint ; and that it was as fine a morn as any o' your feather-bed birds could wish ; up he comes, with a smile on his mug, and says to the mate—‘ Moore, my boy,’ says he, ‘ crack-on her again—it's all blown over, I hope !’—‘ Why, I hope so,’ says Bob ; ‘ but if

I was you, Sir,' says he, 'I'd now turn in for a bit of a spell.' 'Ah!' said the skipper, 'there's no one needs it more.—No tongue can tell the trouble I've had on my mind—so here's take your advice,' says he, and down he dives.

"Well, you may suppose, where there were no more hands in a watch, than could fairly hoist a to'gallant-sail, without the help of a 'handy-Billy;\*' the standing part o' the morn was pretty well taken up, in letting out reefs,—setting sudden-sails, and clapping on every rag as would draw.—It was six bells afore every thing, low and aloft was trimmed—about the time the cabin-fry used to come upon deck to shake their feathers, and snuff the breeze; and just as old Sangaree-Jack pop'd his pate over the companion-hatch, we feels a thump, (for the ship was going 'twixt eight or nine knots, at the time,) as if she'd suddenly struck on a rock.—'What the devil's *that*?' said the mate, flying

\* Jigger purchase, a small tackle so designated by seamen.

for'ard, and running out on the bowsprit, to see what it was.—‘It must be a wreck !’ says he; ‘’kase, by *my* reck’ning,’ says he, ‘we’re exactly forty-four leagues from the land:’—as much as to say, you know, it coudn’t be a *rock*.”

“ Well, I suppose, ’twas nothing more nor a craft, bottom up,” interrupted a top-man, impatient to arrive at the sequel.

“ Handsomely ! handsomely, bo’ !—you’ll have it in time.—Well, you know, the ship was brought reg’larly up, all standing—she’d no more way on her, no, nor if she’d been fast by the nose.—‘ Heave here the grains,’ says Bob, to one Bill Lawson, a Sunderland lad—a young chap, you know, as never made a West-Ingee vyage afore.—‘ The *what?*’ says Bill.

“ ‘ Why the *grains*, you bur-throated-beast,’ says Bob, though he’d a coal in his guzzle himself.—‘ Do you want the ship to be jammed like Jackson ?’

“ Well, you know, seeing there was a bit of

a breeze 'twixt Bill and the mate,—I let's go the wheel, for 'twas my trick at the time, gives it to a bit of a boy, and for'ard I flies out on the bowsprit to Bob.—‘ Did you ever see such a sight?’ says Bob ; and no more *never* I did—for there was the whole sarfus o’ the sea, for more nor a mile, in one black, moving mass of frisking fins.”

“ Small helm, Tom,” said one of the group.

“ It’s as true, as I’m here,” says Tom, endeavouring, by the gravity of his face, and earnestness of his manner, to overcome the incredulity of his staggered auditory.—“ They were as thick as mites in a cheese ;—and spread far and firm enough, to ’ave brought-up the whole channel-fleet ; aye, and Billy-Blue to boot, in the *Willy de-Parry*.

“ Well, by this time, you know, Bob had lain-out on the spritsail-yard-arm with the grains in his fist.—There, he was, sitting astride on the stick, for all the world like the pictur-sign you see of Saint George a horse-back, sarving out the dragon with the sarjeant’s pike—‘ *I’ll* make a

lane,' says he, 'or fork a few on 'em, I'll warrant,'—and if he didn't, no matter.—He killed forty or fifty, afore he knew where he was."

"What! *Beneties, Tom?*" said one of the forecastle-men, with an incredulous leer at his companion.

"Ah, *Beneties!*—what d'ye think o' that now? Why he tumbled them belly-up, faster than he could haul 'em in.—The water was coloured with their blood for miles and miles around—the Red Sea was a fool to it.

"Well, in course, *Misses Sangaree-Jack* must be *in* for the sport—for the curnel bundles below, and turns her out.—Up she comes, looking as black as a heavy nor-wester of a winter's night.—'What!' says she, with a sneer on her snout, and toss of her head, as hove out four of her foremost grinders;—for you see, she could ship and unship her head-rails whenever she liked.—Why, in smooth-water weather, you'd see her, battle-ship fashion,

shewing her two-tier o' teeth,\* but come on a cap-full o' wind, there was in muzzles—down ports,—and strike both tier in the hold—pocketed, you know, as close as her purse.—‘Well,’ says she, as soon as she picked up her snags, as luckily lit in the starboard fore-taucle-haliard tub—‘Well,’ says she, sputtering out her words, a’ter this sort of fashion, for want of her teeth—‘Though it theems to be a thin to thoot a tholitary bird,—yet there appears to be no harm in th’slaughtering fish in *thoals*’ :—for you see the folksel was kivered with bleeding Beneties, flapping their fins, and tossing their tails, as they gave up the ghost.”

Here roars of laughter accompanied Tom’s imitation of the lisping lady.

“ ‘ Exactly, Ma’am,’ says Moore, ‘ ’kase Bob, you know, was a bit of a scholard ; and knew the natur, that’s to say, the law o’ the thing,

\* Line of battle ships are obliged to run in the lower tier of guns, and close those ports, in a fresh breeze.

as well as the old woman with *all* her larning.—‘exactly so, Ma’am,’ says he, ‘for one’s *wilful murder*—and no one, no, not Neptune himself, could bring in the t’other, as either *manslaughter*, or as the crowner calls it, ‘found *fell i’-the-sea*.’’

“ Well, you may suppose, *this* silenced the old lady’s lip.

“ As Bob made a bit of a lane, the ship soon shov’d through the shoal, and run the fish out o’ sight.—Well, matters went on as pleasant as you please,—’kase the sight of fresh grub gag’d all the growlers.—There was the saucy, old Sarah, for all the world, like one o’ your Newfoundland-Bankers—fish, fish, fish, scattered all over the deck from stem to stern.—There was boil,—there was broil,—there was fry,—there was fritter,—there was staike,—there was stew,—such stuffing I never seed in my day.

“ Well, this all goes off very well, till about two bells, in the a’ternoon-watch; when the man a’ the wheel,—one Dick Williams, a Bristol

man-born, and a thoro-bred bruiser—(I saw him once sarve-out a press-gang in capital style)—well, just as the bell strikes two, down he drops, in one o' your staggering-bob-fits, with his head in the binnacle-box.—This passes for nothing, you know, at the time; so there was no more to do, nor hand him below, and bundle him into his sack.\*

“ Well, nothing happens for more nor an hour.—They'd nearly done dinner below in the cabin; when looking over the taffel—(for the wind was right aft at the time)—the mate observes a precious lot of dirt and grease a gathering astarn.—‘ This won't do,’ says Bob,—and down he brushes below to the skipper.—‘ We must shorten sail, Sir,’ says he—‘ for it's looking,’ says he,—‘ I axes your pardon, ladies,—for you see, Bob was a bit of a *ladies'* man,—‘ but it's looking,’ says he,—‘ as black as—blazes astarn.’—‘ In with the royals and reef,’ says the

\* Hammock.

skipper, tossing off the grog in his glass ; and he and old Sangaree-Jack tumbling up from below, after Bob.

“ Well, you know, the skipper gets scarcely on deck, afore this infarnal squall—for it followed us faster nor Bob expected—catches the ship—carries away our sudden-sail-booms, and snaps slap in the slings, the main tausle, and to’gallant-yards.—There was Bob, letting run here—and hauling down there ;—whilst the skipper was bellowing and bawling more like a new-made boson, nor a master o’ a marchanman—though no wonder to be sure, for this here bird business turned his brain.—‘ Up from below,’ says he, ‘ you skulking sons of ——, up from below, you lubberly beggars ! and save your owner’s sails and spars.’

“ Well, out o’ fourteen hands, only *four* comes up from below.—Two crawls for’ard as well as their pins could carry’em,—but ’afore the first on ’em fetches as far as the win’less—down he drops as stiff as a midshipman ; and

brings up the t'other right on the top on him !—But bless you,—this was a trifle to the two as tried to come *aft*—they'd a frightened the devil himself.—There they were—first sheering to port—then staggering to starboard—their eyes starting out o' their sockets—froth foaming out o' their mouths—and every hair on their heads as stiff and as straight as a rope-maker's hackle.—Well,—a'ter making a stand for a while, and a set, like one o' your Senegal tigers, at Sangaree-Jack—they both gives a groan as would 'ave rent the heart of a hangman, and falls on their faces flat at his feet!—‘ *See what you've done !—see what you've done ! you d—d old scoundrel !* ’ said the skipper, to Sangaree-Jack.—‘ *See here,* ’ says he, as he haul'd one o' the poor fellows out o' the gang-way, and laid him aside in the water-ways.—‘ *Down below, dive !* ’ says he,—‘ *damme, dive, and send all your infarnal fry up to clew down the sails.* ’—Well, up comes the women, screaming and squalling.—Such a nitty never was

known,—‘Oh, Captain!—Oh, *Mister Mate!*—*Dear Mister Moore!*’ says Sangaree’s wife—coming blarney over Bob, in one of her feck-shunate fits—for, you see, she was one o’ your sort as are always d——d fond of a fellow whenever afeard—‘Dear, dear, *Mister Moore*,’ says she, ‘is there nothing, nothing can save us?’—‘*Nothing, Ma’am!*’ says Bob, ‘unless *you*, and the ladies jump for’ard, and clap-on the tausle clewlines.’

“ Well, though you may fancy ’twas no laughing matter,—when four fine young fellows were laid stretched upon deck,—still, I’m blessed, but ’twould ’ave made a sick monkey clap on a grin, to’ve seen the petticoats trying to find their way for’ard to the tausle-clewlines.—Howsomever, poor souls!—they didn’t fetch far—for afore they gets to the chestree, down drops the old woman and her daughter!

“ Well, you know, ’twas bad enough afore—But now ’twas all *up* with us—for I don’t know

how it is,—but somehow or other, a fellow's never himself when he sees a woman in any sort o' distress, much more a-dying on deck ; so by Bob running here—myself there—and the skipper every where, to sarve out assistance,—I'm blowed if the ship didn't broach to,—and slap the three topmasts goes over the side.

“Howsomever, to shorten the yarn,—there wasn't a soul in the ship, save Bob,—Sangaree's niece, (the creole you know,) and in course Pill Garlick—but kick'd the bucket—dropped down as dead as herrings afore the first dog-watch was out—”

“Well, and how came you *three* to cheat the devil of his due?” asked another inquisitive topman.

“Why, you see, both Bob and myself bowsed-up our jib-stays abit the night afore ; and in course, as our coppers were burning hot the whole o' the day, the little appetite the pair on us had, was all for the drink.—And yet, your

know-nothing sanctifiers are always a-telling you that *drink's* the death of a man!—Now here, you know, 'twas the *saving* o' we ——”

“ Well, in course the young lady *too* was groggy ?” interrogated Toggle.

“ Why, she never said nothing o' *that*—but she told us, she never tasted as much as a morsel o' the fish—‘for,’ says she, ‘I thought it too strong for my stomach.’

“ Well, you may suppose, we were now in a terrible mess—three topmasts over the side—blowing blunderbusses—raining bullets—the sky all a-fire with fast flashing lightning—the sea foaming froth, like a washerwoman's tub—the deck scattered over with corpses,—and only Bob, myself, and this here young lady, left to man and manage the unfort'net barky.

“ Well, this sort o' weather lasts till sunset—When, says *I* to myself, let's see how she sets.—There she dips in a low, black bank, as pale and watery, aye,—as a widow in her weeds.

“ Well, there was nothing for us, you know, but to lash the helm-a-lee, till we sees what sort o’ turn things ‘ould take.—It was all very well till the dark sets in—that tried our pluck.—I think I now sees Bob and myself with this here Miss—Miss Clem—Clem—what the devil was her name?—I know ’twas as long as the main-to’bowlin; but no matter; I’ll mind another time.—I think I just sees the pair on us, with the girl atwixt us, shivering and shaking, like the sails of a craft in stays—all holding-on by the bulwark,—and, every now and again, the unfort’net lass, clinging like a cat to one or t’other of us, as the lightning flashed in her father’s phiz—for you see, he lay face up, just where he first dropt abreast o’ the binnacle.

“ Not as much, no, as a *look*, much more a word, passes betwixt us, for four or five hours.—At last, about two bells in the middle watch, as we reckon’d it—(for Bob was *even* afeard to look at his watch)—the lightning stops, and down again comes the heaviest fall o’ rain as

ever was seed since the flood—Every drop was as big as a two-pound shot!—it lulls the wind, and levels the sea as flat as a pancake.—In less than an hour, there wasn't a breath out o' the heavens; and the sea was as smooth and as glassy, aye, as a sheet of fresh water ice.

“ Still not as much as a mutter was moaned.—For three hours or more, Bob's eyes were fixed like a ferrit, on one dientical spot on the deck:—and the three on us kept in our breath, for all the world, like so many fellows trying to float on the water.—Well, in this sort o'way, we stays clustered together till the grey o' the morn:—when just as much light breaks in the east'ard, as a body might read the compass-card by: Bob, for the first time looking aloft, gives a start as fairly frightened the girl into fits.—‘ See here! ’ says he, singing out like a soger, and seizing me fast by the shoulder—‘ look up—look up—there *they* are—there *they* are! right overhead.’—Well, though it isn't a trifle as would startle Tom, I'm bless'd if I could bring

myself, for four or five minutes, to lift as much as a lid; 'kase, you know, 'twas no pleasant thing to be looking aloft, when the decks below were kivered with dead:—How did I know, but 'twas some o' their souls steering for Fidler's Green!—At last, Bob lays hold o' my flipper, and lugs me clean out in the middle o' the deck.—‘Don't be afeard,’ says he, ‘it's *all* right.—The've had their revenge—and now, ten to one, they'll tarn the tables.’— Well, I looks up at last,—and what d'ye think does I see?’”

“Why old Sangaree's ghost, I suppose,” said one of his most credulous auditors.

“No, but a flock,” continued the narrator, “and I vea-reli believe, of the same dientical careys, as unfortenly, old Sangaree shot the bird from.

“Well—‘Now, Miss,’ says Bob, trying to cheer up the creole—‘Now, Miss,’ says he, ‘lend us a fist, and we'll tarn too with a will, and clear away the wreck.’

“Well, there was cut away here, and slash

away there.—Hard a weather the helm—aft both fore-sheets—(for a beautiful breeze springs up with the birds)—clear the decks o' the dead—(and to shorten the yarn, afore the watch is relieved)—eight-and-forty hours wasn't over our heads, till the barky was brought up in safety abreast of the Twelve Apostles in Port Royal Harbour.—What d'ye think *now* of sailing o' a Friday?" exclaimed this attester of miracles: who, having first eyed the group like an inquisitor in quest of unbelievers in vain, turned his back on the watch, singing—

“ ‘ My name it is Tom Tough,  
I've seen a little service—’ ”

“ Tough enough at a yarn,” whispered our old friend, the linguist.

## CHAPTER V.

## CHANNEL GROPING.

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—Cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd,  
Some days and nights elapsed before that he  
Could altogether call the past to mind ;  
And when he did, he found himself at sea.

BYRON.

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THE anticipations of the officers and crew were abundantly fulfilled in the dulness and dearth of any subject for excitement, which characterized their continuance on this station—for with the exception of homeward-bound merchantmen, and an occasional rencontre with pilot-boats on the look-out for ships up channel, the month of September and a few days of

October, were passed over in one unvarying sameness of prospect and duty, alike weary to the eye and the animal spirits.—Indeed, at the best of times, this station was never remarkable for affording a wider field for the enterprize of a cruizer, than in casual recapture; or what was yet a less frequent, as well as a much more difficult task—the entrapping of some skulking privateer, or little lugger-rigged fox, protected from the consequences of his prowling by the facility of earthing himself, when hard pushed, in any enemy's port in the vicinity.

The first week in October was not concluded, ere a cutter, dispatched from Plymouth, arrived on the station with 'fresh orders' for *Staunch*: and the boat's-crew which conveyed the bearer of these instructions on board the *Spitfire* communicated, *viva voce*, a piece of intelligence, relative to an Order in Council issued by the British Government, which, from its welcome nature, was hardly announced, ere it flew through the brig like wildfire. That Order

in Council had been the result of a policy, as sound as it was just ; and it is only to be regretted it had been so lately acted on : since the principles as well as the necessity of prompt interference in crippling those resources of our active enemy — the French Emperor — which consisted in a fraudulent trade, carried on under the American flag, to cover enemy's property, and defeat the rights of a belligerent, had so long previously been detected, and distinctly pointed out, by statesmen in this country, more than ordinarily conversant with the laws of nations.

The intelligence, thus conveyed, appeared at first, to be too much in unison with their anxious wishes, and was deemed to be of too gratifying a nature to be true : and the announcement of a system, which, from a first impression, might be consider as authorizing a war on American property, was treated as unauthenticated rumour ; or, as sailors term it, '*a galley packet.*' All doubts were, however, subsequently cleared up

on the subject, by the effect of the receipt of the instructions themselves upon their commander's spirits and reanimated countenance.

The lieutenant commanding the cutter was beset by all the officers of the *Spitfire*; and doomed to endure a series of questions on every topic, from the ordinary news of the day, and common-place inquiries after friends in port, to that which was uppermost in the thoughts of all:—namely, the increased probability of making prize-money on the station newly assigned them.—A confused *mélée* of debate and of biddings took place among the officers round the capstern.—For, on these occasions, the spirit of speculation, so inherent in man, and nurtured from being pent up and confined for a period, burst out with redoubled energy; and proposals were made by several, to dispose of their scrip or stock in the Bank of Hope, or, to be more explicit, their share of prize-money.—Some put up for sale their share for the first week after arriving at their future destination, which was

now discovered to be, off the port of L'Orient, in the Bay of Biscay. Others solicited a bidding for the produce of a month's cruize; whilst the master and purser, having laid their heads together, resolved, like good judges, and men of the world, to risk nothing, and neither sell nor buy.—Nor was this spirit of speculation confined to the officers alone.—The mania seized the carpenter, gunner, boatswain, mates, and midshipmen.—The prospect of gain, by buying, was altogether problematical; whilst that arising from sale was capable of being rendered a certainty by confidently asking enough.—This may account for the disparity between the numbers of candidate buyers and sellers, the latter of whom were most numerous.—And even the *Jacks* themselves, however unacquainted with the doctrine of chances, or the value of life interest, or interest for long or short periods, were found freely sporting the only commodity which they had to speculate on with their shipmates—to wit, their grog.

Hasty offered a '*Quarterly Bill*,' for the chance of Burton's share during the first fortnight: an offer which might be considered very liberal; but which, contrary to his expectation, was refused.—The secret was, that he had powerful reasons to woo Fortune by every possible means, rather than sport with her possible munificence for so trifling a consideration as three months' pay:—having known some instances within his own experience, of officers whose temerity in speculations of this nature, had given occasion to many fruitless regrets in after life.—Had it been a matter of barter with another officer similarly engaged in active service in another ship, and with equally good prospects of prize-money, perhaps, like others in the profession, he would not have declined entering into an engagement to share reciprocally; because he would in that case be remunerated for the apparent sacrifice made by the additional chance thus given.

But we have thus long kept the real reason

out of sight in order to afford the reader that which is very cruel in a writer to refuse ; namely the pleasure of indulging in conjecture.—Doubtless it has been anticipated—Burton had retired below, and was busily engaged in pouring out his soul on a sheet of paper.

The surgeon, who, from being an Irishman, had a natural predilection for speculation, and every thing pregnant with a wager, appeared all in a fret lest Hasty's ardour should cool, and exclaimed, with an eagerness calculated to defeat itself

“ Oh, by the powers ! it's myself that will take your offer.”

“ Avast there, doctor,” said Hasty, seeing how quickly this son of Esculapius caught at the bait—“ you're not going to bleed me in *that* way, my boy.”

“ In what way ?—Sure isn't it all a lottery ?”

“ An Irish lottery, perhaps ?”

“ Oh, come now, aisy with your nationalities ; I lay you a gallon of the rale Ineshoan whisky,

that you won't find a freer man at a bet from the Currah o' Kildare to Doncaster, than an Irishman.—And mind, Mister York, I never saw one o' your country that wou'dn't handicap his own breeches, barring he had nothing else to stake."

"Well," said Hasty, with a laugh, "I confess it's almost hang-choice, especially if a horse is concerned."

"Aye, faith—a horse and a halter is the proverb—and it's yourself ought to know your own wake side."

"Well, you're not going to weather on my weak side.—I'm York enough to know the difference between a commissioned and a warrant officer's share."

With spirits of so speculative a turn, it requires no great stretch of foresight to divine that an accommodation was effected with little difficulty; and being a 'free better,' as he avowed all his countrymen were, the surgeon soon acquiesced in terms wherein the Yorkshireman had the best of the bargain.

The forecastle, from its being thickly crowded, and the busy hum of many voices vying with each other in their biddings, might not be considered an inapt representation of the 'Rotunda,' in the Bank of England, or that formidable and fickle arbiter of Fortune, 'Change-Alley.'—Gold was not the object uppermost in the mind of the thorough-bred tar; and they were so frequently sellers, that they could hardly be accommodated with any thing like an offer from the marines and afterguard, who were gifted with more shore-going prudence.—A present drop in the bottle, like a bird in the hand, had irresistible charms for those who might be said to live from day to day, regardless of the future.

"Here's *my* prize money for the cruize going for a week's allowance o' grog," cried 'Twisting Tom,' jumping down the fore-ladder; and finishing the sentence when he landed on the lower deck, and thought himself out of hearing of the officers.

"Here's *mine*, too, for the same," said one of the fore-topmen.—"Hang it, a fellow might

lose the number of his mess afore he gets out o' the hands of the gallows agents."

" You may say *that*, bo," said a third—" why I'd more nor, aye, seventy pounds coming to me when I belonged to the *Le Lore*; and it was so long a heaving in sight, I gave it up for a bad job, and was obligated, at last, to sell it to a Jew on the Hard, for a suit of mustering rigging, a thundering old turnip,\* and a bladder of gin."

The greater part, however, were in a state of high exhilaration at the prospect of more active and beneficial occupation. A station like that off *L'Orient* was, under the present circumstances, certain to ensure their falling in with the trade then carrying on in French property under the protection of the American flag.— The most daring attempts were every day made to enter French ports under blockade, by American fast-sailing merchantmen, denominated, from their invariable habit of 'running'

\* A watch.

for a port, “Runners.”—And, to the credit of republican principles, it may be admitted that, in thus exposing themselves to capture, and, at least, detention, there was a display of patriotic feeling, as much as self-interested motive.—The object of their government was obviously to defeat the policy then pursued by Britain: so far it would appear that, as American citizens, they were determined *generously* to contribute to this object by some sacrifices, and at great risk; yet those who understand the secret of human motive will, perhaps, attribute this recklessness on the part of the Transatlantic tars to more powerful inducements—the certainty of a market, and the enormous prices to be obtained for their merchandize in the event of succeeding.—Indeed, in this respect, they had precisely a similarly strong motive for ‘risking the run’ as the smuggler: for they had accurately ascertained, by computation, that in the event of *one* ship in three breaking the blockade, the proceeds would sufficiently remunerate the parties concerned in

this description of hazardous enterprise.—From all these considerations, therefore, the Bay of Biscay was considered by adepts in “sea-attorneyship,” (to use Lord Byron’s expressive phrase,) as the most desirable cruizing ground a British man-of-war could possibly occupy—and hence an appointment to this station was sought after with extreme avidity, and throughout every channel of interest, by every ambitious and active officer.

Whilst the letter-bag was making up, and epistles inditing, in person or by proxy, the commander of the cutter was invited below to partake of the best fare the captain’s table afforded; and after the two superiors had quaffed a glass to their mutual success, the visitor betook himself to his boat and returned on board.

The wind had been in a point which barely allowed the brig to ‘lay her course;’ yet such was Staunch’s anxiety to reach his appointed station, that hardly had his visitor descended

the side ere, pursuant to previous orders, the *Spitfire* was seen under a crowd of canvas close-hauled upon a wind—displaying her pennant and ensign at the peak, until the token of salutation upon parting company was returned by the lively cutter, which now bore away large up channel.

Before the evening had set in, or the ship's company had supped (for the seamen of our service, following the prejudices of the ancients, always sup long before our fashionables dine), several indications were discoverable to the experienced eye, of approaching bad weather.—The sun was sinking pale and watery in the west—the slanting ray which shot across the vapoury mist that only partially covered its orb, assumed the appearance of a waterspout, falling in an oblique direction on the darkening deep.—Black and heavy clouds were observed accumulating in the horizon ahead of the ship's course—the undulating motion of the longer and steadier swells now yielded to a quicker

succession of shorter seas, whose curling heads topped high and burst heavily in briny foam.—Porpoises, the never failing indication to the seaman of change of wind or hard weather, were seen rolling in the direction of the wind, and wantonly revelling alongside, as if mocking the slow progress of the labouring vessel, which had now ‘broken off’ four or five points from her course.

That ardour and excitement, lately so strongly manifested by all on board, appeared gradually to subside on the approach of bad weather. These unpropitious appearances, with the wind backing round in an adverse direction, just as they were about to proceed to a new destination, were considered by the sailors as peculiarly ominous; and their sanguine expectations of prize money seemed all to have vanished like a vision.—The joke, the friendly banter, the jovial laugh, which, within the last few hours, had enlivened the lower-deck, was soon superseded by silent reserve and sullen gloom.—Yet, let not the novice hastily conclude that this transition from

delightful anticipations to their opposite, was occasioned by any apprehensions for their personal safety.—An experienced cruizer has long made up his mind to these things, as matters of course; and if, previously to that intelligence which had so far excited their hopes, it had come on to blow a hurricane, it would have been regarded, as an ordinary occurrence, with perfect indifference, so long as the vessel had ‘sea room,’ and plenty of ‘drift’ in which to lay to.—The secret source of their uneasiness, and of their dissatisfaction, for it partook of both, will be best understood from the tenor of a little galley debate, which now took place on the ‘tween decks.

“ Well,” said the captain of the forecastle, as he jumped down the fore-ladder, and chucked his little tarpaulin hat under the mess-table, —“ I doesn’t know what to make o’ this here

“ Of what?” said his messmate.

“ Why this here breeze, backing round

against the sun.—I doesn't like the look on it at all.”

“ I don-know who would.—Them there hog-back'd varments never come larking about a ship for nothing.”

“ Oh, blow the pauposes!—But, bless your heart, what else can you expect?”

“ Expect!—why?”

“ *Why?*—why, are you such a blind buzzard as not to know the cause on it all?”

“ I'm grog'd if I does.”

“ Then you ought to be grog'd—it's plain enough to any one with half an eye.—How a sinsible man like *he*, aye, and a thoro'-bred seaman, too—for there's never a better, I take it, from stem to stern—a fellow, too, as has always a weather eye open—how the likes o' he could ever *think* o' such a thing, is a regular-built pauler to Tom Toggle!”

“ What, Tom? what?”

“ *What?*—Why, sailing of a *Friday*, to be sure.”

“ Oh, *there* you are!—are you?—You’re right enough there—aye, aye—I wish the skipper only hard the yarn *Twisting Tom* spun on the folksle, the night we sailed, about the bad luck of starting, or breaking ground *at all* on a Friday.”

Here the Nestor of the crew, with a look of profound wisdom, interposed his sage advice, avowing—“ If *I* was the captain, blow me if *I* wouldn’t bear up for port again, and start fair afresh.—There’s never no good comes of such ‘speriments.”

Far be it from us, in this age of philosophical anchor-smiths, and geometrical toll-gate keepers, to defend prognostications which accord so little with the enlarged spirit of the times. But the remark is too trite, that ‘ we are creatures of circumstances’—and it is too much to expect that men who have been ambitiously nursed in principles which have raised this country to an envied eminence amongst nations, are to be whisked about by every wind of new-fangled

doctrine.—As well might the leopard be expected to change his spots, or the hyena his indomitable spirit, as the legitimate sons of the ocean strike their flag to philosophy; and admit themselves in error upon a point settled by the experience of sea-going folk for centuries past.—Certain it is—this prejudice, if prejudice it be, is a hydra of many heads; and is felt in the most ordinary occurrences, on shore as well as afloat.—Nor would it perhaps be desirable in this, any more than in other instances of popular predilection, that the bias of the uninformed mind to fatalism should be rashly invaded; which, in the British seaman, as well as the Mahomedan soldier, is so often the only rallying cry of heroic devotedness, and patriotic desperation.

In consequence of the stormy indications now but too perceptible, the sails had been reefed, and the vessel made snug for the night.—As it is customary in some ‘crack ships,’ for the warrant officers to examine the rigging aloft,

in the evening as well as the morning, to see that no part of it chafes, or is liable to injury ; the gunner, in the performance of this duty, was laying out on the lee main yard-arm, and in over-reaching himself, he unfortunately fell from this elevated situation, clear ‘ over-all’ into the sea. The announcement of this catastrophe soon reached, with electric effect, the little parliament between decks, and shortened the debate without coming to a division on the question.

“ A man overboard !—A man overboard !” was caught and reiterated by twenty voices in a breath.

“ There it is !—Didn’t *I* tell you,” said Toggle.—“ You’ll have *more* of it yet.”

“ Ay, it’s only beginning,” said another, as he knocked down poor Tom, in his generous hurry to assist a shipmate.

A scene of confusion and anxious alarm here ensued, which it is impossible to conceive, much more describe.—Tompion was a general

favourite.—Had it been otherwise, the cry of “a man overboard” is sure to harrow up the feelings of every being in the ship.—In the scramble to get upon deck, the crossed-ladders in the hatchways were choked; and their eagerness to get up, only proved the means of detaining them longer below.—The more light and nimble lads caught hold of the combings, and swinging themselves up by their arms, fell sprawling on all fours, into the ‘lee-scuppers.’— Some ran aft to lower the jolly-boat.—Others flung, with all their united force, towards the direction where the man was seen, a grating which was destined never to reach him.—The life-buoy was cut away, the carpenter’s bench thrown overboard; whilst the master who was officer of the watch, gave the sharp word ‘to haul up the courses, and heave the main-topsail aback,’ to arrest the ship in her progress.—The hurry and agitation of all tended, in part, to defeat their object; nor could it yet be inferred that this

was any imputation on the discipline of the ship, as every thing was done on the spur of a moment, too pregnant with fear, sympathy, and solicitude, not to afford abundant pretext for spontaneous and unbidden alacrity.—In consequence of the foremast tackle being untimely let go, the jolly-boat was swamped under the stern, and before there was time to hoist the cutter off the booms, the man was observed sinking without a possible chance of relief, as he was unable to avail himself of the assistance of the grating, life-buoy, or boat's-oars, thrown overboard.—There was enough of light on the water, despite of the gloom of the evening, to render the hopeless features of the man distinguishable to Brace, the boatswain; his partner in many a youthful freak, both having entered the service together.—Roused from stupifying horror by an imploring glance from his messmate, the latter shouted in anguish—“ By Heavens, Tom ! I

can't bear that look, I'll save you, or go with you."\* — Nor was it long ere this awful pledge of friendship was redeemed, for in an instant throwing off his looser attire, he plunged amid the waves, through which he cut his way to the sinking man.—Aware of the danger of thrusting himself within that grasp, which is known never to relax but with life, he, cautiously, though firmly, seized him by the collar with his left hand, turning the gunner thus on his back, as the most favourable position for floating; whilst, 'treading the water,' as it is termed, Brace supported his exhausted companion's head above the unfriendly element, and kindly cheered him with assurances of his safety.—Nor was the sympathy of the crew suffered to waste itself in unavailing regrets, or in

\* Were it necessary to quote a case, in order to prove that we do not deal in the marvellous, or sport with the feelings of the reader, we might appeal to the experience of some of the officers of the *Barfleur*, for an authentication of an anecdote relative to two seamen on board that ship, resembling the above stated in most of its details.

mere admiration of their brave shipmate: the cutter had been 'hoist out,' and manned by eager hands, who pulled with inconceivable alacrity to their rescue; and in a few minutes this scene of painful excitement on board was happily exchanged for that of heartfelt and general congratulation.

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## CHAPTER VI.

## A CONFLAGRATION.

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E'en now the devastation is begun,  
And half the business of destruction done.

GOLDSMITH.

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DURING several days which elapsed since parting with the cutter, nothing of importance occurred on board the *Spitfire*, which had been beating up against a strong adverse breeze, occasionally under close-reefed topsails and courses.—The wind and sea had considerably abated; when Staunch, anxious to reach his cruising ground as soon as possible, just previously to piping to dinner, thus addressed the master—

“ Come, Stowel!—with this wind we shall never get hold of a Yankee runner, unless we clap sail on the brig, and beat her across the Bay.”\*

“ Why, no, Sir, we shall not make mooth of it rowling in the trough of the sea, like a gull with a wonded wing—she wants more sail to steady her—more spars are sprung by a weather lurch, than fifty lee ones.”

“ To be sure, Stowel! that can be easily accounted for—one occasions something of a steady strain; whilst the other, in consequence of the sea receding from the weather bilge of the vessel, brings up every thing with a sudden surge.”

This little council of war terminated like many greater; where, not unfrequently, a vast deal of trouble is taken, in sounding the opinion of others, to afford a colourable pretext for following the opinion of the principal.—Nor is

\* Bay of Biscay.

this permission to the inferior to sport an opinion either impolitic, or prejudicial to the service; as long as there is any truth in the adage, that men would rather prefer being led than driven.

“Come, Hasty,” said Staunch, looking to windward, and then aloft—“Come,—turn the hands up, make sail.—Shake two reefs out o’ the taupsels—cross the to’gallant-yards, and set the sails.”

Busied in this duty, the whole ship’s company had deserted the ’tween decks, and were occupied on deck and aloft, with the exception of our old friend the linguist, whose attention to duty, from being on the doctor’s list, was dispensed with.—Poring over the pages of an old ‘Porney’s French Grammar,’ a present from Burton; his lucubrations were interrupted by the unseasonable susceptibility of his olfactory nerve.—‘Puzzled as usual in the pronouns’ this intimation of that vigilant sense would perhaps have been unnoticed, had not the impulse been

repeated again and again; when, like a man thoroughly awaked from a dream, he started on his feet, at seeing a smoke oozing from the crevices of a locker, on the lee side of the lower deck, a few feet abaft the foremast.—Flinging down the book, he with a precipitancy so common in cases of imminent alarm, was about to exclaim aloud “Fire!” when, recollecting the regulations of the ship, he repressed his breath, and quickly repaired to the quarter-deck, where he announced his apprehensions to his commander in a low tone of voice.—Without exchanging a word with any but the quarter-master, on whose mind the necessity for silence was impressed by the captain’s significant and anxious gesture; Staunch descended with alacrity below to ascertain how far these suspicions were founded.

The dark, dingy smoke which now began to pervade the deck, left no doubt in the captain’s mind as to the correctness of the seaman’s suspicions.

The topsails had been hoisted, and the top-

gallant yards just “swayed across,” with about twenty of the crew aloft, when returning upon deck without betraying any thing like perturbation, Staunch directed the drummer to beat the “Fire-roll.”

On board many ships, even some of those most highly disciplined in the service, an alarm of fire would have created general consternation, and the worst consequences might have been anticipated, from the embarrassing, and appalling confusion which would probably ensue.—But numerous provisions had been made by the Captain of the *Spitfire*, to counteract the often too fatal effects of an alarm, which has a tendency to dissolve discipline, set obedience at defiance, and unman the stoutest heart.—He had formerly served in a ship of the line, a number of whose crew, in consequence of a sudden cry of fire, had, in their alarm, jumped overboard; although the ship was moored within a few cables’ lengths of the dock-yard, from whence

they were certain of immediate succour, independently of that which was sure to be afforded by the boats of all the men-of-war in the port.—He knew that in such cases much depended upon the officer of the watch at the time, whose prudence or activity might often render the consequences less calamitous, if not altogether prevent the catastrophe.—Stimulated by regrets and reflections of this nature, his active mind, even whilst a junior, had devised many expedients and precautions, for increasing the chances of saving the lives of the crew, or preserving the ship herself, in case of a fire at sea.—His love for the service, and his really humane disposition, induced him, the moment he found himself in command, to reduce these reflections to practice: and he had not been long appointed to the *Spitfire*, ere he laid the foundation of a system, by the introduction of what he termed a '*Fire Bill*,' by which every individual ' borne on the books,' in the event of fire, whether at sea or in port,

was stationed to some specific duty, the moment the alarm roll was beaten. And in these duties his crew was instructed, and occasionally exercised in the same manner as they were at their guns, and various evolutions aloft.

The roll of drum was no sooner heard than the crew, startled by the unwelcome sound, were for a moment arrested in the performance of their duty, remaining stationary in the tops and various parts of the rigging.

The emotion occasioned by the dreaded drum soon subsided ; and the men, turning their eyes to their commander, seemed to derive encouragement from, and be actuated by the same cool intrepidity, which characterised the conduct of their brave superior ; whose humane and keen sensibility to the imminent peril of all committed to his charge, was neither discernible in his look or demeanour.—That he had wrought himself up for all the emergencies of the occasion was

apparent, from the fixedness of his posture, high port, and commanding aspect.—Firm and immoveable, as if prepared to “brave the arrows of outrageous fortune,” he still felt, that let prudence devise, or boldness achieve what means they might for their salvation, almost every thing depended on the subordination and discipline of the crew in this trying hour.—His anxiety soon gave place to a confident contemplation, that much of the difficulties of his situation were removed by the ready obedience displayed to the prescribed regulations.—Deliberately, and with comparatively little bustle, the men were observed repairing to their respective stations, eager to perform the duties therewith connected.

Some were seen “rigging the pumps,” others drawing water through the port-holes, and flooding the decks from stem to stern.—Here a few hands were clearing the boats on the booms, “tracing up the stay,” and rounding down the

“ yard-tackle-falls,”\* preparatory to hoisting them out.—Now a division of marines were seen tumbling off the booms the captain’s cumbrous and heavy pressed hay-bags, and shouldering them over the side: whilst others were unstowing the ship’s company’s hammocks from the nettings, and soaking them in the rolling mass of water now accumulated on deck; which, agitated by the ship’s motion, as she mounted the wave, or descended into the trough of the sea, revolved along her deck, or broke in plashes against her sides.—Thus, thoroughly soaked and wetted in salt water, these sacks were passed down the hatchways, as fire dampers, to a few of the petty officers below on the “ ‘tween decks.”—In the hope of excluding air, and thereby preventing an extension of the fire abaft, this party had nearly succeeded in building, with these wet

\* Many of our “yacht-rigged ships” are now seen without “yard-tackle pendants” aloft, which are kept below on deck, to trace up as required.—We once witnessed the loss of a valuable life by this unnecessary piece of nautical dandyism.

hammocks, a wall or barricade across the lower deck ; which was only interrupted by the dense suffocating smoke, compelling them very reluctantly to abandon the completion of their enterprize.

The topmen aloft hauling and ‘whipping up,’ buckets of water, filled by the ‘firemen’ below, continued wetting the sails and rigging in every direction.—The remaining marines were employed in working the only engine on board,\* whilst the pipe was directed by the chief boatswain’s mate with as much steadiness and aim, as if occupied in washing round the ship’s side when at anchor.

Action is every thing to a sailor ; and it will be found that nothing is more disheartening than permitting him to brood over a disaster. In the bustle and activity of duty, another species of excitement and anxiety originates, calculated to divert his attention from pondering

\* In those days, the largest three-decker in the service was only furnished with one fire engine.

on an uncontrollable calamity, which would only uselessly repress his spirits.

The 'carpenter's crew' were busied above in scuttling the waist in different places, so as more speedily to flood the deck underneath, in the immediate vicinity of the 'bens' or lockers, where the spare sails and combustible stores were stowed.

The mound of wet hammocks, piled on the lower deck, already appeared to check the progress of the flame abaft.—Every thing, however, depended upon stifling it forward, and eventually preventing its bursting out through the deck above.—This event was momentarily apprehended by the commander; and from the contiguity of the fire to the pitch and oakum seams of the planks—all composed of American pine—it was only natural such a result must shortly follow.

Perhaps no officer, however his senior in the service, was better acquainted with the character of those whose destiny was confided to his care,

or knew better how, by sacrificing to their humour, to kindle their enthusiasm.—He was as well aware of the importance of timing things with the tar, as he was that men generally, and sailors in particular, were imitative animals.—Whether it arose from these considerations, or that he was impelled by the overpowering influence of the hour, his conviction of the necessity there existed for making light of every personal sacrifice was soon made apparent to the seamen.—Despite of their proverbial contempt for expense and cost of attire, they were not prepared to see their captain, on finding materials failing for keeping down the fire, suddenly stripping off his coat, and without waiting to loose the epaulettes attached, trampling it in the water till well saturated; and then hurling it, at the risk of suffocation by the thick volume of ascending smoke, down the fore-hatchway on the flames below.

\* Swabs—literally bundles of rope-yarns used for the purpose of drying up the decks.—In figurative phrase, epaulettes.

“Hurrah—hurrah—more *swabs!*”\* waggishly exclaimed the boatswain, eyeing the epaulettes as they flew past him down the foot of the fore-ladder where he stood, his whole figure blackened with smoke, and reeking with heat and the water that had been cast on him; whilst almost in the midst of the fire—“Hurrah, my lads! soak and send.”

The flames themselves hardly flew faster than the contagion of the captain’s example—every man on deck doffed his jacket or Guernsey frock, and soaking it in the water, passed it on to the boatswain—“That’s your sort,” said he, “heave and awash.—Keep her out o’ the barracks,\* and you’ll soon have her under.”

The clothing of the seamen, so opportunely converted into fire dampers, had, for some time, a considerable effect in subduing the fury of the flames; but the insidious and destructive element soon burst out with renewed vigour. The dense, pitchy smoke rendered all human endeav-

\* The marines’ mess-place, so designated by the blues.

vours vain to reach the spot, where it raged with irrepressible fury, and made irresistible progress. Several unavailing attempts had been made by the boatswain to direct his dampers with precision, or throw them sufficiently forward, so as to counteract the destructive ravages which the ascending flames were making on the ceiling of the 'tween decks, or under part of the planks and beams of the deck.

The captain, and the three commissioned officers, were for a few minutes observed debating together.—“If once,” said Staunch, “the fire burst through the deck, we must bear up to keep the blaze and falling embers from flying aft.”

“I don’t know *that*, Sir,” said Stowel—“fire always creeps to wind’ard.”

“Well—bear up, *I’m* determined.”

“I agree with *you*, Sir,” said Burton—“besides, we’ve a better chance of falling in with relief by going fast through the water, than in remaining by the wind.”

It was now manifest that the ship's company, observing the officers in consultation, began to relax in their exertions; a result which was in an instant perceived by their commander.

“Hasty,” said Staunch, “I perceive the men don't like this parley of our's together—they think danger's in the wind—just jump for'ard, you and Stowel, and cheer 'em up.”

In this Staunch was actuated by a double motive.—He was, above all things, desirous that the spirits of the crew should not be depressed; which he was too well acquainted with the character of the tar not to suspect would be the case, were they to imagine there existed any reason for this secrecy; or, in other words, that the danger was such, that it would be unsafe to communicate to them all its alarming extent.—He also was aware that, as a skilful seaman and a man of quickness and resource, Burton was that person whose opinion or advice was more available than that of all the officers in the ship together.—“And, Burton,” said he,

observing that the first lieutenant and master were on the fore part of the deck, and out of hearing,—“I wish to have your opinion as to the prudence of hoisting the boats out, ere we put the ship before the wind.”

Burton paused for a moment in a thoughtful mood.—“It would be as well, Sir,” said he, “to have them out, if—we could be certain it would not have the effect of impressing the men with a greater idea of their danger.”

“Hurrah, my lads!—heave quick in the fore-top,” cried Staunch, endeavouring to direct the people’s attention to that quarter, and prevent them drawing any unfavourable conclusion from his close conference with Burton.

“That’s the danger which ’tis so desirable to avoid,” said Staunch, earnestly resuming his conversation—“however, there’s no time to be lost.—In a few minutes we shall be *compelled* to decide.”

“I foresee it, Sir,” said the lieutenant, “and therefore advise you at once to whip ’em out.—

Besides, a *word* from you, may lull their suspicion of danger."

The captain took the hint.—"Mister Brace," cried he, addressing the boatswain—"hands out boats—we may as well get them out o' the way.—Firemen and topmen aloft—remain in their stations."

The cool and deliberate tone with which these orders were delivered, was in itself sufficiently reassuring; and the orders seemed rather to originate in a desire to clear the deck for the accommodation of the men, than in the prospect of any immediate necessity for taking to the boats.

The cutter which, as usual, was stowed inside the yawl, was whipped over the side in a second; and a steady hand being put on board to steer her, was veered astern by a strong hawser. The launch, or rather the yawl (for in vessels of this size the latter answers the purpose of the former), was not so easily lifted from her bed on the booms: but after she had, with some diffi-

culty, been raised sufficiently high, previously to clearing the gunwhale, the flames bursting from beneath, and catching the fore-stay tackle fall, she fell forward on the guns, and stove in her bows.—A mingled murmur of horror escaped from several simultaneously, in consequence of this disaster, which was as quickly checked by Staunch, exclaiming—“ Never mind, lads—never mind, *we sha’n’t want her.*”

The firm, and even cheerful tone of these consolatory words, seemed to have a soothing effect upon the excited feelings of the anxious crew; who had now renewed their efforts to subdue the flames (which were fast ascending aloft), with a courage apparently proportioned to the magnitude of the perils with which they had to contend.

The jolly-boat abaft, and the gig on the quarter, had also been lowered down, and dropped astern by a hawser, with a boat keeper in each.—This accomplished, the fast consuming vessel was immediately put before the wind;

and it now may be said she flew through the one element, with a rapidity which was only exceeded by that of the subtler flame winning its fiery way through her blazing bulwarks and rigging aloft.

Here Hasty was observed pacing the deck in an anxious, fretful mood, as though labouring under some awful foreboding, suddenly turning to his captain, he exclaimed, as if they had previously been discussing a subject hitherto untouched by either—

“ Recollect, Sir, we sha’n’t now find it so easy a matter to drown the magazine!—It’s most likely we shall have to get the powder up by hand, and heave it overboard.”

“ Overboard!” interrupted Staunch; “ suppose her foremast falls, and we get the fire under, we shall be more defenceless than a collier.—No, no! we’ll still preserve our powder.”

“ Impossible, Sir—how are we to do it?”

“ Drop the mainsail—haul both sheets aft—

'twill serve as a fire-screen; whip the powder up, and lower it over the taffel into the boats astern."

"Egad, you'll make every boat a regular built catamaran to blow ourselves up."

"Well, never mind!—up with it for all that," said Staunch.

"Overhawl the gear on the main yard—man the main sheets," cried Hasty, whose tone betrayed that he thought if the duty were to be done, 'twere well 'twere done quickly; however disappointed that his own suggestion had not been adopted.

The preparations being completed, almost as rapidly as related, the gunner, with a careful party, soon relieved them from a fear, which momentarily grew more pressing; by depositing one half of the powder in the boats astern, and drowning the other by hand.

The flames now ascended so fast, that the topmen aloft were compelled to retreat from the foremast, and slide down by the topmast stays,

to a far from enviable position on the bowsprit :—the communication with the ship being now cut off, by the raging of the flames on the forecastle. The fate of these brave fellows would have been inevitable, had not the last, prior to attempting his descent, with a presence of mind worthy of a more fortunate result for himself, cut away both top-gallant bow-lines from their insertion into the leach of the sails as he stood at the topmast head. These lines, from their great length, when made fast on the bowsprit, enabled the men to lower themselves into the sea, and escape to the boats now towing astern. Unhappily for the inventor of this singular fire-escape, the rope was by this time stranded, and snapped as he plunged into the water ; leaving him to buffet vainly the huge billows through which the ship maintained her wild career.

How gladly would he have exchanged his prospect of lonely suffering and death, for that of companionship in misery on board that bark, which, he foreboded, must prove the grave of

many a messmate. The prayer was hardly conceived ere he was taken into the jolly-boat by the only seamen on board her, who, on witnessing this poor fellow's gallant conduct aloft, and subsequent accident, had, in a moment of excitement, cut the boat adrift, and resolved to share his peril. All this was the work of a few moments ; and now, for the first time, the boat was discovered by the ship's company to have parted. The poor fellows on board her were seen, as they surmounted the heavy deep swells, stepping the masts, hoisting the sail, and endeavouring to keep the ship's track, though at an alarmingly fast increasing distance.

Preceding the brig, and far to leeward, like *an avant courier* of her fate, or harbinger of woe, a dark mass of dense smoke, fitfully illumined by flakes of fire, or bursts of burning embers obscured that part of the atmosphere, whither the forlorn bark seemed recklessly to urge her desperate way.

The day was fast drawing to its dreaded

close; and no prospect of relief could be discovered throughout the wide horizon of waters, by young eyes straining themselves from their sockets, in bewildered anxiety, as these little centinels of the ship's safety sat perched in the giddy eyrie of the main-topmast-head. Many were the painful anticipations of these young adventurers, as they alternately glanced from the fire, now fast mounting aloft, to the hopeless prospect around. Nor will it be thought unworthy of the hardy profession which they had embraced, that the tear glistened in those eyes, or traced those downy cheeks, as they thought with many a mournful presage on their far distant home, and the unambitious happy companions of their childhood.

The explosion of a gun forward, in consequence of the fire now reaching it, was quickly followed by another, and suggested to the captain the propriety of discharging the remainder to prevent any accident occurring, should they be compelled to have recourse to the boats.

Such was the general state of anxiety on board, that the sun's approaching descent in the horizon had been, until now, unnoticed. By some perversity the quarter-master was destined, as in the case of the breaking out of the fire, to be again the boder of bad tidings. His lameness prevented him being otherwise serviceable than in watching the boats astern ; and now, as he looked from the poop, his ominous voice was heard remarking, that they could not expect above an hour and a half's longer light. Pointing to the sun, as he addressed the captain, he exclaimed, “ *She'll dip*, you see, Sir, in less than three quarters of an hour. *She* looks very watery too.”

This observation roused the ever vigilant spirit of poor Burton, who, it may be conjectured, bore his fair proportion of the toils and anxiety of this dismal day. Fatigued as he was, he seized a glass from the capstan head, and flew aloft, determined to avail himself of the short period of day-light, that yet remained, to sweep

with his eye the wide-spread prospect, in the hope of discovering approaching relief.

Three hours and a half had nearly elapsed since the fire was first discovered. Though sometimes partially checked by the ceaseless exertions of the crew, it as often appeared to be renewed with overwhelming violence; despite of the prudent precautions of Staunch, and the daring endeavours of his intrepid tars. He, until now, had been buoyed up with the flattering hope of saving, perhaps, the ship herself; but certainly with a fair expectation of falling in with timely succour, so as to preserve the lives of his crew in this distressing emergency. Independently of the threatening indications of the sky, and peculiarly marked manner of the quarter-master, in thus directing his attention to the gloomy prospect of the setting sun; there was something so dreadfully appalling in the idea of struggling with the raging element in the dark, or being indebted for light to the all-consuming flame, which must, ere to-morrow's

sun, burn their bark to the water's edge ; that it required no ordinary command of countenance to conceal from his crew all the distraction which inwardly preyed upon his mind. Neither was his anxiety likely to be allayed by perceiving the boatswain relax in that boisterous loquacity, which had so long cheered them during their severe labour ; or by over-hearing the few remarks, which escaped from the seamen, whilst ominously hinting at the causes of their unfortunate fate. “ Ah, Jack,” said the captain of the forecastle, addressing the boatswain’s-mate, who had again taken a spell in directing the pipe of the engine—“ *one* pipe’s as good as the *other* now—the game’s all up, I fear.—I thought no good ’ou’d come o ’sailing of a Friday.”

“ I knew,” said one of the fore-topmen, “ them there pauposes warn’t tumbling about the bows for nothing.”

“ Never mind that, bo,” cried Cheerly, the captain’s coxswain, “ it can’t be so bad with us

either ; for you see the skipper still looks up nor-west-and-by-well."

These observations, uttered in an under-tone, added to the increasing perplexities of this painfully responsible situation ; nor could even the compliment conveyed by the last speaker, who so generously borrowed confidence from the gesture of his commander, console him for the disposition now betrayed by these desponding spirits, to relax in their exertions.

He had been turning in his mind the best mode to save the lives of as many as possible of the crew, if forced by the fire to desert the ship. He knew that all her boats, so far from being able to contain the entire ship's company, could not accommodate even half the crew, in the event of bad weather. The danger could no longer be disguised. The carpenter was soon summoned, and received a prompt order to commence at once, with his crew, to saw off, and detach the poop-deck from the bulwarks abaft, in order to act as a raft, if required.

Whilst thus engaged, the brig was overtaken by a squall of wind, accompanied by a welcome torrent of rain. Although the violence of the wind, for a moment, fanned the flame, the influence of the rain tended materially to keep it under.

Burton had been nearly half an hour at the mast-head, sweeping, with searching eye, the whole extent of the horizon. It is in vain to attempt to convey in language the agitated forebodings, or agonizing recollections, which fain would have interrupted him in this anxious scrutiny. Severed, as he then was, though but for a short period, from the bustling throng on deck, busy memory availed itself of this temporary relaxation of the mind, to suggest again and again, that, which had for weeks constituted his day dreams, and haunted his short slumbers by night. The flattering hopes with which he commenced this cruize, and its too probable termination, formed a contrast sufficiently striking. Until now, he had been altogether a crea-

ture of ambition ; this feeling pervaded even the spirit of acquirement, and prompted every effort to distinguish himself. But, of late, all motive, whether of honourable emulation, personal distinction, or professional advancement, seemed to merge in one overwhelming solicitude. Even now, as he grasped the mast-head, to render firmer his giddy glass, and direct it with more certainty, in search of distant objects, on the utmost verge of vision, that loved object, whose ubiquity at all times, and at all places, he acknowledged with devout homage; flitted across his imagination, despite of the many subjects of fearful solicitude which surrounded him on all sides.

In this state of mind, it was not surprising that his attention should be arrested by the dubious form of a sail, which appeared for a moment astern, and coming down with the wind. That anxiety, which so naturally prompts us to be the first to communicate gratifying intelligence, had nearly impelled him to excite a lively,

though, in fact, unfounded hope, amongst men disposed, like the forlorn crew of the *Spitfire*, to catch at any chance of escape. He had already drawn in his breath to enable him to give more effective utterance to the welcome words “A strange sail;” when the still imperfect syllables were checked by the startling recollection, that it could, from its size and position, be only the unhappy boat they had been obliged to abandon reluctantly to its fate. However severely disappointed, he congratulated himself secretly, in having avoided any precipitate disclosure of his erroneous conjecture; and lost no time in apprizing the captain, that the jolly boat was still standing on in their wake.

“How far do you reckon we have dropped the poor fellows?” said Staunch, who adopted this tone; as if to divert, even for the passing minute, the attention of the sailors from contemplating their own disaster, to the more pitiable situation of their forsaken companions.

“ About three or four miles, I should think, Sir.”

“ Scarcely so *far*, Mr. Burton,” said Staunch, who was desirous not to extinguish the hopes of the crew, that the co-operation of this boat might be depended on, were they compelled finally to desert the brig.

“ Certainly better than three,” replied the lieutenant, who now perceived his drift.

“ Well, even so—she’s sure to reach us, should the foremast go ;” addressing this remark rather to the men near him, than to the lieutenant aloft: “ and, if that don’t occur, we can shorten sail, and pick her up.”

This conversation had not been concluded above six or seven minutes, when Burton, his glass still to his eye, shouted in clear and exhilarating accents, kindly intended to reach every ear on deck—“ A strange sail right astern !”

For a moment every operation on board was suspended, to listen, in breathless silence. The

glad intelligence was again repeated from aloft  
—“A strange sail right astern !”

A loud shout of triumph burst from the crowded deck ; once more that deafening cheer was heard ; and again it swept, with the sough of the wind, across the wide waste of ocean.

“ That’s the boy !” cried the boatswain’s-mate, who had as great a respect for the dreaded Sisters three ; and was as rank a fatalist as most of his superstitious profession—“ that’s the boy, that always brings the luck. I never yet seed him go to the mast-head for nothing.”

All on board resumed immediately their several employments, with an alacrity which seemed difficult to account for, at that very moment, when a new hope of succour had arisen, which was totally independent of their own exertions. Hasty exclaimed,—

“ Better round to, Sir, and heave the main-taupsle to the mast.”

“ Impossible ! my good fellow.”

“But recollect Sir! we’re running away from relief!”

“Better so than hurry on our destruction, before relief can possibly reach us. No, no; keep the wind on the quarter—clew up every stitch we can get at, and deaden her way with every species of stop-water.”

In some degree relieved from the onerous and agonizingly responsibility, which had weighed down his spirits, he turned from Hasty, and hailed the mast-head.

“Well, Burton,” said he, “what d’ye make of her?—standing this way, I hope?”

“She’s a large, square-rigged vessel, with studden sails low and aloft.”

“Aye, aye?”

“Steering the same way as ourselves!”

“One of our cruizers, perhaps?” said the captain.

“Can see half way down her taupsles.”

“Hurrah!” said the boatswain, “Poll’s got hold of the tow-rope!”

“ Half way down her tau’sles?” said Stowel—  
“ then it ’ill take the standing part o’ the first  
watch to over—.”

“ Hurrah ! the engine my lads !” shouted  
Staunch aloud, anxious to drown the concluding  
part of this yet unfinished sentence. Then lay-  
ing his hand on Stowel’s arm, he thus addressed  
him, in a gentle tone of reproof,—“ Keep *that* at  
least to yourself—guard yourself, Sir—surely  
nothing can be more improper in any person,  
but more especially in an officer, than to suffer  
an expression to escape him, which may check  
the ardour of the crew, or repress their hopes.”

Nothing could be better calculated to set off,  
by contrast, the conduct of another officer on  
this occasion, than the incautious language of  
Stowel, who was one of those rough knots, as  
tars term them, or matter-of-fact men, who  
unceremoniously uttered whatever he thought,  
however unseasonable the truth, or ticklish the  
inference drawn. Whatever might be the con-  
sequence of the practice, its principles could

hardly be censured ; since, in him, it was bottomed in plain dealing and downright honesty, which saw no reason to colour over truth. Burton was a bird of quite another feather. For he, participating in the anxiety of his commander, had represented the stranger as much nearer, than she really appeared to be from the mast-head. Indeed, when he asserted he could see her half way down her topsails, had he adhered strictly to truth, he must have confessed he saw little more than her top-gallant sails above the horizon.

The spirits of all on board were now as much elated, as a few minutes before they had been depressed. Although nearly worn out with fatigue, the substitution of other duties, besides those connected with subduing the flames, appeared to give the men a respite from sameness of labour and exertion. Sailors hate monotony —and Staunch had now an opportunity of relieving some from a duty of which they began to be weary, by changing their vocation.

Those who had been drawing water, and working the pumps and engine, were now slinging shot-boxes, and towing them over different parts of the sides. The spare topsail yards in the chains, were lowered into the water, and the main-boom launched over the quarter, clear of the boats astern; all which produced a corresponding visible decrease in the rapidity of the ship, which might be said to hurry from friendly succour, and fly for its life. The sails had been all clewed up abaft, but the yards were still kept square; for though “bracing them by,” or pointing them to the wind, might have somewhat contributed to decrease the ship’s way through the water, still *Staunch* was apprehensive of so bracing them, lest the foremost extremities of the yards should come within the action of the fire.

By this time the foresail and foretop-sail were both literally burnt to tinder, and their fiery fragments were whirled in eddies across the gathering gloom. The ponderous, and pitchy spars, on which the bellying canvas had

been spread, were now heard crackling amid the rustling flames fanned by the fickle element; whilst the yard-arms, now deprived of their "lifts," and other supporting gear, by the destructive fire, were seen topping on-end, in a manner truly revolting to the feelings of poor Brace the boatswain.

"Aye, there she is—all in mourning\* for her fate," cried Brace, evidently affected by the tottering condition of every thing aloft. Then resuming his loquacity, which, since Burton had descried the stranger, was observed to gain ground apace—"Hurrah!" said he, to those engaged in raising water—"Hurrah, boys! drag and 'draw—she nears us fast—don't you smell 'em mixing the grog astarn?"

From its greater thickness, and perpendicular position, the fire did not so soon penetrate the heart of the foremast, whilst the lighter spars were vividly burning throughout. The hori-

\* When a ship, or square-rigged vessel appears in mourning, the yards on each mast are alternately topped on end.

zontal position, and greater breath of flat surface presented to the rising flames by the foretop, gave ample fuel for the conflagration.

The foretop-mast was now seen tottering in the cap. The head-braces, and every rope which led from the foremast aft, were all let go, and overhauled; so as to facilitate the fall of this weighty spar clear of the ship.

“I say, Brace,” cried the captain, conveying a mandate directly through the medium of an interrogatory—“I say,—can’t we manage to cut away the laniards of the starboard quarter backstays?”

“Eye, eye, Sir,” said the boatswain, who piqued himself on anticipating, whenever he could, his captain’s drift—“Hand us that there axe—here goes”—then flying into the thick of the fire, he hardly had time to make one ineffectual cut at the laniard, before the scorching blaze compelled him to retreat, without accomplishing his purpose. “Come—spell—oh!” cried he,—“a fresh hand at the axe.”

For want, however, of a rival of the true salamander breed, the challenge was not so freely accepted; and the axe for some moments remained out of commission. This was not to be endured by Brace, who, after rolling and sousing himself well in the flooded scuppers, to soothe the anguish of his scorched skin, seized once more the axe, and casting a contemptuous look at the topmen around him, he bellowed aloud—“ What ! d’ye think then you’re *all* for *Fidler’s Green*?—When you come to unreeve your life-lines, you lubbers, some on you’ll find a hotter birth than this.”

Then making a desperate rush on to the blazing bulwark, he succeeded, his back turned to the flames, in severing the triple turns of the laniards, which bound the backstays to the channels. The backstays now disengaged from their fastenings, Staunck directed the master to watch a favourable opportunity for “ heaving the brig up in the wind;” with the hope, that the lurch to leeward, which would naturally

accompany the sudden alteration in her course, would pitch the topmast, already wounded by the fire, over the side.

“ It can’t be doon, Sir,” said Stowel, in a sullen tone, who had not as yet recovered from the effects of his captain’s rebuke; “ unless ye sheet-home the main-tau’sle, and haul your stop-waters up.”

“ That’s soon done,” cried Staunch, with an atoning air of ready acquiescence, strongly contrasted with that of the blunt north-countryman. “ Hasty, sheet-home the main-taupsle—Burton, rowse the shot-boxes out o’ the water, and—a—”

“ Better first, Sir,” said Burton, “ apprise the boat-keepers astern of our intention.”

“ True, we must mind the powder.”

“ Aye, and mind, too, and not swamp the boats in the bargain,” again growled the master.

“ We can veer ’em further astern,” cried the first lieutenant.

“ Only for the fire flakes, I’d rather tow them at a shorter scope,” said Staunch.

“ Why not heave the powder out of the cutter at once ? ” said Burton ; “ there can be little doubt the ship in pursuit of us is a *friend*.”

“ True,” said Staunch, “ and if she were a foe, the powder would now little avail us.”

“ Besides,” said Stowel, “ you’ll have to lighten her at last ; for the boats are shipping green seas every minute.”

Hasty, jumping aft on the poop, shouted to the boat-keepers—“ Heave over the powder—bear a’ hand—we’re going to bring the brig to the wind ! ”

This order was gladly complied with, almost as soon as issued. Conformably with another order, the boats were veered further astern : and all was now announced in readiness to attempt this nice manœuvre.

At this period, the ship must have presented, even to the far distant spectator, a most aweful and imposing spectacle. The fire had got total possession of her forward ; and rose like a bright pyre against the lowering sky, surmounting in

vivid bursts the very top-gallant truck: whilst hurrying along each slender spar, or searching the involutions of each pitchy rope, the subtle flame was seen coiling and winding its way through the rigging like a snake of living fire.

Mounted on one of the after caronades, the master was observed, for a few moments, watching the rolling waves on the quarter: then selecting the heaviest of the fast succeeding seas, he quickly exclaimed to the all-anxious steersman—

“ Now stand by!—*hard a port!*”

Obedient to her helm the fiery fabric broached instantly to; throwing up her blazing bow to the wind; then rising for a moment on the summit of a topping wave she fell over to leeward down the steep descent,—gave a heavy lurch, the effects of which were heard through all her groaning timbers. The shock thus given to the lofty mast, now bereft of all support, combined with its ponderous weight, snapped it short above the

cap, and pitched it, all flaming, amid the hissing foam of the sea.

Rapid as was this evolution, it was full fraught with danger. In the faces of all, alarm—in some, horror, was strongly depicted ; when as she luffed to the wind, they beheld the whole volume of lambent flame flying aft, and licking, with forked tongue, the shivering topsail ; or sweeping with sportive and fearful familiarity through her mast, spars, and rigging.

“ Right the helm !” said Stowel, as the mast went over the side.

“ Hard a-weather !” cried Staunch.

“ Clew up now—clew up, boys !” said Hasty, who had already ordered hands to the topsail clew-lines. “ Clew up, and don’t let the flames catch the foot o’ the sail.”

A stunning cheer succeeded, as the crew perceived the wreck of the mast drifting clear of the boat astern. Again, in quick obedience to her helm, the vessel’s head receded from the wind ;

whilst the flames, which had been somewhat checked by the "shipping seas," continued their devastating course, concentrating now their fury within the fore part of the ship.

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## CHAPTER VII.

## A FRIEND IN NEED.

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But now there came a flash of hope once more.

BYRON.

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GREAT as was the anxiety which prevailed on board for their own preservation, it is but candour to admit, it was scarcely less evinced on the deck of the gallant vessel now crowding all sail to her relief.

Distance rendered the *Spitfire's* colours, now streaming down the wind, ‘union inverted,’ in token of distress, altogether undistinguishable. —But to the experienced eye of the frigate's

commander, who had ascended to his own mast-head to take a more accurate personal observation, there was enough to raise a presumption in his mind that she must be one of our own cruizers in distress.—This accounted for the press of sail, which Burton, previously to descending, described her to carry, and which enabled the frigate before dark to see the *Spitfire's* lower yards clearly from deck.

Had 'Steamers' been then in use, and the practice of performing voyages by fire and smoke 'obtained,' instead of by wind and water; the *Spitfire* might, whilst daylight lasted, have blazed away until she had burnt to the water's edge, without having excited either alarm or sympathy throughout her ill-omened flight across any of those seas now navigated by the magic craft of the mystic sons of Hydraulic science, whose proud defiance of the wind, and contempt of a 'head-sea,' make the fearful vision of the 'Flying Dutchman' no longer a fable; and strip *Jack's* dread phantom ship of all its terrors.

The evening was ushered in with all the usual indications of the approach of bad weather, and as daylight sunk upon the horizon, the sky to windward assumed a stormy aspect.—The wind too, which, though fresh, had been comparatively moderate, now became gusty ; and the long swells of Biscay, instead of rolling in unbroken masses, were surmounted by ominous ‘horses-heads,’ (as sailors term them,) curling their agitated tops with feathery foam.

In such a state of things, it may be conjectured that the anxiety on board both vessels was proportionably increased, as the sun shrouded his last limb in the bosom of the darkening deep.—On board the one, apprehension prevailed that the brig would blow up, before relief could reach her; whilst the *Spitfire's* crew, aware that no such explosion could take place, from the precautions adopted, were only alarmed lest the vessel should be wholly enveloped in flame before the stranger joined company.—Indeed, if

any thing could possibly increase the concern and perplexity of the commander of the frigate, it arose from perceiving the fiery pile pursuing her reckless course unaltered, and wantonly flying from that succour he was so anxious to afford.—He had visited the forecastle at least twenty times, in as many minutes, to make repeated inquiries of the various officers who by this time had brought half-a-dozen night-glasses to bear upon the fearfully interesting object.

“ It’s impossible !” said he, paceing the deck under considerable excitement,—“ impossible he could have seen us before dark !—or why continue his course ?”

“ Perhaps, Sir,” said the master, who had justly accounted for the cause,—“ perhaps the fire’s for’ard, and he thinks it safest to keep the wind on the quarter.”

“ Perhaps so,—however, if guns, blue-lights, and rockets can draw his attention, he shall have them in plenty.—Send for the gunner, and—  
a—”

“ I beg your pardon, Sir,” interrupted the master, looking to the crowd of straining canvas overhead, with a solicitude which shewed he was nearly as anxious about the fate of their own spars, as his captain was for that of the flaming fugitive—“ but don’t you think we’re pressing her a little too much?—The sticks, you see, Sir, are beginning to complain !”

“ Complain !—Let them :— how can you *hint* at shortening sail, when such a heart-rending scene stares you in the face?—Hold on!—hold on, good sticks !” said the commander, apostrophizing his supple spars with a burst of feeling that did honour to his heart.—“ Hold on but another hour, and we may yet save the poor fellows from destruction !”

Though the master attributed this unmerited rebuke to the excitement of the moment, yet he could not refrain from muttering to himself, as he turned upon his heel—“ Good sticks, indeed! —They must be d——d *good*, if they stand the next squall !”—a prediction which appeared

likely to be fulfilled ; for the wind was freshening fast, and often fell upon the sails in heavy and sudden gusts.

But in this instance, the lively interest felt by his commander induced him to forego that caution, which, doubtless, he would have displayed on a less pressing occasion.

There are cases, wherein the most prudent and justifiable precautions may not only be impugned by inferiors, but be subject to official censure from a superior.—Thus, though a ship will often be found to sail as fast ; nay sometimes faster, by being not overpressed with canvas : yet when employed in pursuit of a foe, or in ‘support of a friend,’ adieu to the reputation of that commander, who on such an emergency, shews not an extraordinary spread of sail.—Such, however, was not the feeling by which the captain of the *Flora* was actuated.—His courage was unquestioned ; and the name of Sir Harry Driver was hallowed in the hearts of all his crew, as the true type of humanity.—It

was not wonderful, therefore, that his mind was entirely absorbed by, and all his efforts directed to, one sole object—the rescuing his fellow-creatures from that fate, which it was now plain, either element must soon—too soon,—accomplish.

Whilst the brave ship was rapidly cleaving her way through the water, the boiling masses bursting in sparkling foam beneath her bows, the spars aloft were heard to creak, and complain in every direction, under the heavy pressure of the low and lofty canvas, which proudly towered on each mast like a pyramid, despite of the gathering gale.—The studding-sail booms were topping upwards, and threatening each minute, as they bent to the breeze, to snap short in their confining irons.—By the additional weight of their outer wings, the top-sail yards thus extended, notwithstanding the support afforded by their taughtened ‘lifts,’ and well-bowsed burtons, were bowing in the slings, and drooping their extremities; whilst the

towering topmast was observed, not without some ominous foreboding, yielding to the blast; or oscillating to and fro with the ‘send of the ship;’ like a supple ash tree on the mountain top, contending with the storm.

Meantime the frigate’s ship’s company were actively employed clearing the boats, and making preparations for hoisting them out.—The fire-engine was placed in the barge, and a proportionate number of buckets in each of the cutters on the quarter.—In the sanguine expectation of arriving in time to save, at least some of the valuable lives now in jeopardy, this kind-hearted and considerate officer had not only directed a spare sail to be spread under the half deck, as a temporary place of repose for the night; but ordered several bales of blankets and purser’s clothing to be got up in readiness, to supply the wants of such as might have suffered from the effects of the fire.—Nor did he even neglect to apprise the surgeon of the necessity for being prepared to administer

prompt professional aid to such as might require his humane attentions.

Occupied in issuing orders of this nature, respecting the economy of the ship, and probable future emergencies, his attention was abstracted for some time from the stormy indications of the weather to windward ; and now, as if to vindicate the character of the master as a man of intelligence, the coming squall overtook them in their course, and fulfilled his worst predictions. Its approach was too rapid to be anticipated by any orders ; it burst on them close astern ; ruffling, and whitening, with the rapidity of lightning, the whole surface of the stricken and agitated sea ; curbing, and even levelling, with the keenness of its fury, the swell of the rolling waves.

“ Ah ! just as I said—here we have it, thick and dry ! ” said the master, looking over the taffrail.

“ Man the to’gallant clewlin’s, and studden-sail down-hauls,” vociferated the captain, through

his trumpet, in accents indicating alarm ; though nearly lost in the deafening conflict of the elements.

“ Mind what you’re about with the sudden-sail-tacks,” echoed the first lieutenant, throwing his night-glass into one of the boats on the booms, and upsetting, in his hurried flight along the gangway, an unfortunate midshipman into the waist.

“ Clew-up—haul-down !” cried the captain, with increased earnestness.

“ Don’t start the top-gallant sheets, till the yards are down on the cap,” bawled the master.

“ Ease away the lower-studden-sail haliards—clew down—clew down the fore-to’gallant-sail,” cried the first lieutenant.

“ Let go the short-sheet in the fore-top.”

“ Hold on—hold on the fore-topmast sudden-tack,” bellowed the boatswain ;—“ I’m blowed but you’ll have the sail across the stay. *There*, some lubberly beggar has let go the lower-studden-sail-guy in the waist.”

In this state of confusion, the seamen tumbling over each other, as they flew about the deck in the dark, to ‘ clew-up’ and ‘ haul-down:’ the sails straining, and ready to burst from their bolt-ropes, the fore- topsail yard snapped sharp in the slings, and the fore-topmast studding-sail-boom broke short in its iron. Deprived of all solid support, by the fracture of their spars, the outer sails, till now proudly extended to the breeze, drooped their shattered wings, and bagged to leeward in the blast. The furious flapping of the wildly agitated sails, struggling, as if to disengage themselves from their confining gear; now shook the frigate to her very centre, amid the thunder-like claps of the rebounding canvas, which drowned alike the word of command, and the shrill whistling of the gale through the cordage.

“We shall never save the sails,” said the master, “unless we bring the wind on the other quarter.”

“D——n the sails!—think of the poor

souls!" said Sir Harry;—"Cut away their gear, and let them fly to the devil!"

"With all *my* heart, Sir," muttered the master, "so they're properly expended in the log."\*

These orders were quickly complied with by a few smart fellows, who were right glad to substitute the knife for the more laborious progress of hauling their arms off, in a vain endeavour to gather in the flapping canvas.

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\* *Expended.* That is "accounted for" on the face of the log-book as no longer part of the ship's stores; somewhat in the same way as the Irish waister is said to have attempted to satisfy his captain, respecting the kettle that was lost overboard.

*Waister.*—"Sure, Sir, you can't say a thing's lost if a body knows where it is."

*Captain.*—"Certainly not, my man."

*Waister.*—"It's myself that's glad to hear your honour say that same—bekase I've a notion now where it is—for it's only this moment the kettle slipped over the side, and I'm sartin sure it's gone to the *bottom*."

Doubtless the sails reached the same destination; and by parallel logic, their expenditure could be almost as satisfactorily accounted for to the Commissioners of his Majesty's Navy.

Previously to the sudden coming on of the squall, the forlorn condition of the two sailors, who had determined to share each other's fate in the jolly-boat, was fast improving ; and they themselves, though unable to keep pace with, much less gain on the brig, were encouraged to hope, from the moment they perceived a sail coming down with the wind, that she was directing her course, so as to assist the ship which had been compelled to leave them to an almost unavoidable death. If so, as long as they held their frail bark in the same track as the burning vessel, they were almost certain to be overtaken by the ship astern, and relieved from their perilous situation. One moment, all was reviving hope, the next, despair. The squall, which, catching first the frigate, seemed to hurry her faster to their assistance, bore on its wings, to these unhappy men, swift and sure destruction ; and the same furious sweep of the gust, which carried away the frigate's topsail yard, and studding sail-booms, had no sooner overtaken the

frail boat in its devastating course, than she broached too, and was instantly engulfed in the giant eddies of the deep: closing for ever the gates of hope and of life, on these hapless, yet faithful companions.

Possibly their hard destiny will be the less regretted by some who allow their feelings to be enslaved by their political bias; when it is confessed that these poor fellows, thus united in rude friendship, and a ruder fate, were no other than the blunt tars, whose predilections for a sailor's life were so long proof against the wily appeal of the itinerant evangelist of discontent and economy, on the beach at Dartmouth.

Contrary to his expectations, it appeared to Sir Harry, as he looked over the side at the fast passing foam, that the ship was pursuing her course with unabated rapidity; notwithstanding that her canvas had already been reduced to main-topsail and foresail.

“ Bless my soul !” he exclaimed with astonishment, “ she appears to be flying thro' it as fast

as before we shortened sail!—Heave the log, and see what she's going."

"Aye, aye, Sir," answered the mate of the watch, throwing himself astride on the after part of the quarter-deck hammocks, which were still stowed in the nettings—"Hold the reel there—Quarter-master, get the short-glass."

The sand had no sooner run out the fourteen seconds, than the long graduated line, which had been flying-off the reel with the rapidity of lightning, suddenly stopped.

"Ten-and-a-half, Sir," exclaimed the midshipman, in a tone of exhilaration, natural enough at his years, when perhaps nothing is more gratifying than a consciousness of rapid motion—"Ten-and-a-half," he repeated, rubbing his hands with infinite delight.

Like another *Cassandra*, gratified by the fulfilment of his unheeded predictions, the master was heard, in a tone of triumph, to exclaim once more—"Didn't *I* tell you so—she

wanted no pressing such a night as this—D—in it, she scuds along like a witch in a hurricane."

The deep shades of night now settled on the cheerless prospect, and darkness shrouded every object in the gloomy horizon—changeful fortune still frowning on the wretched—The fickle moon, fair weather queen of night, withheld her light as if to damp their courage and increase their embarrassments. The sullen scene was, however, fearfully relieved at moments, by a signal gun, anon by the livid glare of blue-lights from the frigate; or the explosion of the rapid rocket, high in the gloomy vault of heaven. Under any other circumstances, a spectator might have imagined, from the frequency of these discharges from her deck, that the frigate herself was the ship in distress; but here the position of the peril was defined with fear-fraught accuracy, by the wild raging flames, and the gloomy illumination of red glaring haze, which hung awfully suspended immedi-

ately over the *Spitfire*, in a semicircle, assuming an indistinct globular form in the higher regions of the air, occasioned by the reflective power of the atmosphere.

For some time past the hull of the brig had been rising to their view ; and they could see distinctly the part of the vessel possessed and fast wasting beneath the wild ravages of the all-devouring element. The crew had relaxed their endeavours to extinguish the fire, as well from being worn out by previous fatigue, as from the encouragement they now derived from the near approach of succour. For such was the luminous effect, produced by the enormous mass of towering flame athwart the deep, that the ship astern could be indistinctly seen, and to their great joy, was conjectured to be a frigate of the first class.

A striking contrast was observable on the decks of the two vessels : whilst every one on board the frigate eagerly crowded the forecastle ; the unhappy crew of the *Spitfire* were seen,

despite of the discipline of a ship-of-war, mingled with the officers, pell-mell, and cooped up promiscuously on the poop and quarter-deck. As the frigate neared the fugitive, the red reflection of the flames fell upon her sails and hull, involving the friendly bark in the livery of fear.

A short consultation took place between Sir Harry and his officers, as to the mode to be adopted in approaching the burning wreck. In his generous anxiety to close with the brig, the captain announced his intention to run past him, in order to facilitate his dropping his boats on board.

“ You had better not run any such risk, Sir,” interposed the first lieutenant, in a suitable tone of deference to his superior—“ we shall have his embers flying on board us, and setting fire to our sails and rigging.”

“ Well, but damn it, you see he won’t heave to; what’s to be done!”

“ Why, run in his wake, within a cable’s

length or so," said the master; "then round to, and you'll see how *soon* he'll follow your example."

"True," said the first lieutenant; "besides, he'll then lie under our lee, and the frigate will make a smooth for the boats."

"Very well," said Sir Harry; "the moment we round to, out barge, and lower the cutters from the quarters."

"Whatever is to be done, there's no time to be lost," said the second lieutenant, "for I see the fire has taken hold of her main-top."

A sound as of a distant echo, faintly wafted across the waters, was distinguished on board, despite of the violence of the wind.

"Hark! if that's not a cheer," cried the master, "there's no snakes in Virginia."

"That it is, I'll be sworn," said the captain, with evident delight. "Return it by all means, 'twill keep up their spirits.—Turn the hands up cheer ship."

Rushing forward, the whole ship's company

were instantly crowded on the forecastle, or seen jumping up in the fore-shrouds ‘manning the rigging.’ This mode of marshalling the men, and preparing to execute the order in form, was here adopted with the intention of rendering the effect of their aggregate voice more loud and distinct as it was borne down with the wind in a concentrated volume. That such a signal of their anxiety might excite corresponding encouragement in those whose lives were in imminent peril, the commander resolved to give it the fullest possible effect, and ordered the boatswain to ‘stand by’ and give the time according to the immemorial usage of the service in similar cases. Impressed with the importance of the office imposed on him, the boatswain now gave the preparatory flourish with his pipe, and a shout rent the blast, which might have startled the monsters of the deep, but that naturalists inform us (contrary to the profound opinion of that sage angler, Cotton, whose authority on piscatory philosophy is of some weight) that all the finny

tribe are deaf. A second flourish of the pipe succeeded, and a second shout louder than the last. Again, and for the last time, the stormy welkin rung with an exhilarating cheer, like the discharge of artillery, swelled by the loud, lengthened tones of all the frigate's men and officers. After a few seconds, the same faint echo, heard before, was again borne along the waters ; and as it died on the eager ears of the frigate's crew, convinced them that their heart-felt huzzas had already produced the best effect on those they were intended to encourage ; and that the cheer was heard and returned.

Amid the anxiety of the captain to afford the most prompt assistance to the ship in distress, it did not escape him, that in consequence of the rolling of the vessel, and her labouring motion in the heavy sea, which was fast getting up, the operation of hoisting out the barge was likely to be one of considerable risk. The first lieutenant, whose character was caution to a proverb, perceiving the ship lurching heavily to leeward,

suggested to his captain the propriety of previously running in the lee main-deck guns, lest in dipping their long muzzles protruding over the ship's side, they should come in collision with the gunwale of the boat, and possibly stave her to pieces before she could be completely extricated from the stay and yard-tackle falls, which were to lower her into the sea. In this suggestion the captain immediately acquiesced, exclaiming—"Right, right, run 'em in at once." Then addressing the master with earnest emphasis, he observed—"Remember the sheet-anchor-stock over the side; and mind, when we're hoisting out the boat, you rather let her *fore-reach* than gather stern-way."

"Aye, aye, Sir! *we'll* take care that pile-driver don't send any of our boats to the bottom. Quarter-master," added the master, now sensible of the importance of the suggestion, "mind after we round to, that you keep the helm no more than a couple of spokes a-lee."

The whole of the larboard battery of guns,

from the sheet-anchor stock forward to the captain's bulkhead, were, to use the language of the lieutenant who issued the order, "run-in, in no time."

Every thing being complied with which prudence could dictate, the frigate, when within the prescribed distance of the *Spitfire*, which she was fast nearing in her wake, put her helm a-lee, and rounded to the wind on the starboard tack ; laying her main-topsail to the mast, and assuming a stationary position under her two after try-sails, and fore, and fore-topmast staysails. To this alteration from her previous course, she drew the attention of the brig's people by burning a blue light on the forecastle. This new position, and the signal which accompanied it, were no sooner observed by the brig, than she was seen following the same movement, and coming to the wind in a parallel direction.

" There she rounds to," said Sir Harry, " bear a hand—quick, quick—out boats."

“ I knew it,” said the master,—“ took the hint—never was out in my reckoning yet.”

Ere the boatswain had ceased vociferating “ Hands out boats,” the yards and stay-tackle falls were all manned by the crew; who had coolly anticipated the order.

“ Away with the stays,” cried the boatswain. “ High enough—there you are—haul away the yards—D—— my wig, *mind* what you’re about with the fore-and-aft guy.” And then anxious for the safety of the heavy barge, which continued high in air to oscillate from and to the frigate’s side, with the roll of the vessel; endangering her being smashed in pieces whenever the weather-lurch flung her ponderous weight against the ship’s bends, he shouted to the hands in the boat—“ Out stretchers, boys, and bear off—Let go the stays—Lower of all—lower roundly—let go—o—o.”

At the latter mandate, all hands loosened their hold of the various purchases, and the barge

coming down by the run,' suddenly fell into the agitated sea. Taking advantage of a 'smooth,' both cutters were cautiously lowered from the quarters, and their crews, with some difficulty, embarked, by descending, or sliding down the boat tackle-falls.

The two junior lieutenants appointed to superintend this arduous duty, repaired to the quarter-deck, by the captain's order, and received a caution to beware of taking too many into the boats. "Remember," said Sir Harry, "that in a service of this nature, there is a still greater necessity for coolness, than even intrepidity; nor is it at all unlikely, that their discipline may yield to the dread of the danger, and occasion the capsizing of the boats, should they jump aboard of you in numbers.—Therefore be cautious how you run upon her quarter."

"Cautious!" muttered the master, "it seems an easier matter to pay-out advice, than coil it in. Had he minded *mine*, we should

have saved both sails and sticks—But never mind—like the king, he can do *no* wrong.”

As this was said out of ear-shot of the captain, it met not from him that rebuke, which otherwise it would, no doubt, have received.

“ Be cool,” continued Sir Harry, “ be steady, —for remember coolness here is true humanity.”

“ Of the truth of that remark I am well aware,” said the elder lieutenant.

“ Never fear, Sir, I’ll do all that man can,” rather impatiently exclaimed a beardless Hotspur, who had but “ shipped” an enviable epaulette, in consequence of recent exemplary conduct.

Whilst these arrangements were making, the *Spitfire’s* people were occupied in cutting away, as far as the fire would permit them, the shot-boxes and spars towing overboard, lest they might stave the friendly boats coming to their assistance. Stauch now addressed the seamen and marines who surrounded him on the poop,

driven aft in a dense mass by the rapid encroachment of the fire.

“ Let me warn you again, lads, not to attempt jumping into the boats—Attend to me, I’ll be answerable for the lives of all, and shall be the last man to quit the ship !”

This assurance produced a short lively huzza, and was the first intimation the *Flora’s* people received, that matters were going on as they could wish.

“ Let me entreat you,” he continued, “ to take your turn, and wait till your names are called over as you stand on the books—Two trips are certain to carry us all on board—but if you attempt to crowd the boats, it’s all over with you !”

“ D’ye hear that, boys ?” said Brace, mustering up all the little energy left him from excessive fatigue, and the injuries sustained by the fire.—“ Now mind, no scrambling, you know ; fair play’s a jewel—none o’ you, I take it, will lose your call ;” and then, turning to Burton,

who was his great favourite, he added, in an under tone—"I say, Mister Burton, as you know, I stands out o' hail ahead o' you on the books, if you've any fancy for my turn, you're as welcome as the morning sun."

"There, the boats are off," cried Staunch—"haul up the cutter quick—let us despatch her first."

"Right, Sir, right," replied Hasty—"she'll be out of the way of the others, and prevent accidents;" then addressing the captain's clerk—"Muster the first twelve on the books."

These, consisting of the gunner, boatswain, carpenter, cook, and eight others, descended the vessel, not without a renewed solicitation on the part of Brace to Burton, to avail himself of his turn.

"Come, come, Brace," said the captain, "you've done your part like a man, and no one on board requires rest, or the surgeon's help, so much as yourself."

"Well, Sir, if you say so, I suppose I must

bundle in—though it's not so easy a matter to find a footing in a kicking cutter, with a fried pair of flippers."

"Oh, we'll lower you down by hand," said Burton.

"No, thank you all the same, Sir; never mind—it's not the first time Bob Brace has held on by his head-rails.\* Well," ejaculated the crippled boatswain, turning round to take his last leave of the now deplorable bark—"God bless you, old lass!—though many's the soaking you've given me for'ard, and you now turn me adrift with a scorched hide, I'm not the fellow as can forget you were the first craft I *wet* my warrant in."—Then taking advantage of a lifting sea, and accompanying the action by a cry of "stand *right* under," he, with reckless intrepidity, flung himself into the cutter under the counter, fracturing his arm in the fall.

As the boats passed under the stern of the brig, they were perceived by the first lieutenant

\* Teeth.

to be no longer within the shelter afforded by the frigate's hull from the violence of the sea: He exclaimed to Sir Harry—“We must fill the main-topsail, and shoot her further ahead to shelter our boats, or they'll swamp in returning.”

“Brace up—brace up,” returned the captain—“back, and fill as much as you like, but keep the brig on the lee-beam; ease your helm, up, master—you needn't be afraid of the flames—besides, she's drifting to leeward two feet for our one.”

The boats being now out of view, their anxiety was only, perhaps, increased from the circumstance of their being left to conjecture as to the success or failure of their hazardous enterprize.

From the superior elevation, however, of the frigate's deck over that of the lesser vessel, and the bright light of the flames, now involving her entire hull, and frightfully waving above the very heads of the people, Sir Harry was enabled to see partially what was done on the latter's

deck. Crowded as that part of it appeared, which alone was tenable by the crew, it gave him a degree of consolation to perceive that there was no tumultuous movement on deck.

Had not the most judicious precautions been taken by the young officers in the boats to prevent more than one at a time from approaching close under the *Spitfire's* quarter, to take in her people, several lives must have inevitably been sacrificed. For such was the heavy pitching and sending of the brig in the furious waves, which now ran mountains high ; that, drifting in this hapless condition, a mere wreck on the water, with her helm lashed a lee, she would, doubtless, have stove the boats to pieces under her counter.

Never before, perhaps, was there witnessed such a decided triumph of discipline over the dread terrors, naturally awakened in the minds of all the actors, in such a scene. All waited their turn, without expressing any unbecoming impatience, or repining.

Perceiving that the boat, now closing the frigate, was not one of his own, and that her fatigued crew could with difficulty keep her head to the sea, and avoid presenting her broadside to the curling summits of the watery ridges, which, breaking on her beam, would have certainly swamped her, Sir Harry edged away the ship, not only to shorten the 'pull' of the *Spitfire's* people, but to quiet his own suspense relative to the danger that might be apprehended from the powder's exploding on board the brig.

"Boat ahoye!" he cried, through his trumpet, in a loud voice, which, from being borne on the wind, was distinctly heard by the people in the *Spitfire's* cutter—"Is the magazine drowned?"

"No, Sir, no—the pow-der——;" from the respondent being to leeward, and, therefore, having to contend with the wind, the remaining part of the sentence was altogether lost.

"Bless my soul! how truly unfortunate," ejaculated Sir Harry, in a tone of dejection, too plainly indicating how suddenly the intimation,

apparently conveyed by this imperfect sentence, depressed his hopes.

“Aye,” said the master, “you’d better, Sir, luff again to the wind.—Take my advice Sir, run no nearer.—You may depend on’t,” continued he, with an earnestness of manner which clearly indicated a conviction on his mind, that he momentarily expected the dreadful and dreaded event—“she’ll be going off in a tangent, and doing us a mischief:—one should give as wide a birth to a burning ship, as you would to a sunken rock.”

“Hark !” cried Sir Harry, heedless of the master’s monition—“they’re again hailing in the boat—silence in the waist—silence fore-and-aft !”

Again the voice in the boat was heard, articulating each syllable with that precision peculiar to scamen when hailing at a distance. “The pow—der—is—all—” and again a pause ensued, as if the speaker was watching for a lull.

With the same syllabic distinctness, Sir Harry

repeated to himself—"The—pow—der—is all—that I distinctly heard."

"Thrown—o—ver—board," added the voice in the boat.

"Thrown overboard—thrown overboard," exclaimed the first lieutenant, ambitious to be the first to repeat the glad tidings.

"Thank God! thank God!" briefly ejaculated Sir Harry, whose reanimated hopes soon betrayed themselves in every feature of his countenance, now vividly illuminated by the awfully bright conflagration.

"Pipe the gigs away,\*—and have them in readiness to relieve those poor worn-out fellows the moment the people are out of the boat."

"Of course you'll despatch her again, Sir?" asked the first lieutenant.

"Certainly, if not stove."

"We'll have to bail her out first."

"Well, recollect there's no time to be lost in a sea like this!"

\* Meaning the gig's crew.

“ The gig’s crew were already on the gang-way to relieve the *Spitfire’s* people, who, from excessive fatigue, could hardly lay in the oars as they now arrived alongside. To assist them in their ascent, man-ropes and life-lines were hung over the ship’s side.

“ Heave in the sternfast !”

“ Keep from under the anchor-stock !”

“ Bear off—bear off !”

“ Jump up—jump up !”

As these short sentences were uttered by different voices both in the frigate and the boat, some were seen jumping through the ports ; others, dipping in the water with the roll of the ship, were like half drowned cats clinging to the chain-plates ; whilst the more robust succeeded in hauling themselves hand-over-hand up the side.

“ All out now, Sir, but the two boat-keepers and the boatswain,” cried one of the former.

“ What’s the matter with the boatswain ?”

asked Sir Harry, leaning over the lee-gangway hammocks.

“ He’s lying on his beam ends, Sir, with a broken arm in the bottom of the boat.”

“ Aye, and you might a said, broiled alive like a mackarel in the bargain,” muttered poor Brace.

“ Overhaul the ‘ whip’ down for him,” cried the first lieutenant, who having anticipated accidents of this nature, had taken the precaution to have it in readiness on the yard. This mode of ‘ transporting’ poor Brace was so truly repugnant to his feelings, that he could not refrain from growling aloud.

“ What ! Bob Brace brought to *this* at last—burn’t out o’ one craft, and whipped into another, for all the world like a bag o’ greens, or a quarter o’ beef !”

“ Come, come,” said Tompion, the gunner, who had already descended into the boat with a running bowline-knot at the end of the whip,

determined not to trust to other hands the slinging of his crippled messmate, who, it will be recollected, had so gallantly saved his life at the risk of his own. “Come, Bob, it’s *my* turn now—d’ye remember how you roused the old lady, stock-and-fluke, from under the bows at Dartmouth?”

“Aye, damn the place, we’ve never had luck since we left it.”

The gunner was now in the act of lifting by the shoulder his suffering shipmate on the thwarts, preparatory to slinging, when a deep groan from poor Brace compelled him to relinquish his hold, and drop him again in the bottom of the boat.

“D—— my topights, Tim! mind what you’re at. Haul away on my lower limbs as long as you like, but handsomely, handsomely with my sprung spars aloft!”

“Well, come rouse a bit, old boy—break bulk, bear a fist, bear a fist, we’ll have the boat swamping right under us afore we can clap you

in the slings. Upon deck there!" hailed the gunner: "heave us down a fathom of frapping, or as much as 'ill make us a bit of a breast-rope for the boatswain."

The crippled tar was now, to use the gunner's phrase, 'slung like a lady,' and instantly transported to the quarter-deck of the frigate. Faint and breathless, he was borne to the surgeon in the cockpit in excruciating torture, though not without casting a lingering look at his fast consuming favourite.

Hardly three quarters of an hour had elapsed, before the boats had made two successful trips to the brig, and relieved above ninety of her people from their perilous situation. In performing this duty some accidents had occurred, almost inevitable under such circumstances. The unceasing alternation of the rising and falling of the boats, rendered it a matter of nice calculation, activity, and expertness, to embrace the fleeting opportunities afforded, only at moments, to the faltering foot of the person

descending from the brig; for not unfrequently when he felt the boat's gunwale beneath his foot, the fall of the retreating wave which had raised, not only instantly removed it widely apart from the brig; but presented, instead of the cheering prospect of the boat, as a means of preservation ready to receive him, the appalling sight of an abyss of agitated waters yawning to engulf the adventurer: again the wave rose, but the boat having been swept away, he was compelled to hold on the rope, drenched by successive seas, ere he could make good his landing, or be hauled into the boat neck and heels. A little midshipman, who had vainly made repeated efforts to catch the only safe moment for making his descent, was at length caught by the ankle, the only part of him within reach of a powerful seaman's grasp, when the barge was whisked away by a receding sea, and the poor boy only preserved from having his brains dashed out, in the concussion of the boat against the brig's bends, by the same friendly hand keeping him

bodily under water, until the next sea separated the boat sufficiently apart from the side, to admit of the boy being dragged over the gunwale. Contusions, broken shins, and bruises were the lot of many, and scarcely any escaped immersion, or reiterated drenching, by the sea breaking furiously over them.

In the last trip, however, the *Spitfire's* cutter, in transporting the people, swamped alongside of the frigate, and soon went to the bottom. The other three boats had been so stove by repeated concussions against the ship, in taking in the fugitives, or putting them on board the *Flora*, it was impossible to keep them free, even by bailing out the water in buckets. To attempt another trip with any chance of success, was, therefore, totally impossible, and the most lively alarm was now felt by all for the fate of those left behind. The flame had made a tremendous progress abaft, and swept the whole of the poop; compelling the poor sufferers to shelter themselves, by throwing their bodies flat on

that part of the deck with their faces turned from the scorching element to preserve their eyes from its fury.

The weather-main-rigging had been already burnt through: and the main-mast, now perceived to be tottering, was momentarily expected to fall. It was perceived that whenever this occurred the mast would fall to leeward, and thereby prevent the boats closing with the vessel on fire, in her only approachable part.

The wretched group, whose fate now seemed fixed, consisted of Staunch, with his two lieutenants, the master, and Drill, the serjeant of marines; who, in a luckless hour, conceiving himself a commissioned officer, from having command of the 'party,' resolutely adhered to the determination of his superiors not to abandon the ship until the last.

A hurried consultation took place on the frigate's quarter-deck, as to the probability of affording them relief.

"We've not a boat that can now live," said

the master, “unless we hoist out the heavy launch.”

“For that we’ve no time now in a situation of such imminent peril,” said Sir Harry. “What’s to be done?—something must be attempted for the lives of those brave fellows!”

During this short dialogue, the eyes of all the crew seemed intently fixed on the little council at the capstan; whilst some of the petty officers and elder seamen were observed, despite of the sanctity of such secret committees, encroaching upon the hallowed confines of the quarter-deck, as if to catch the whispered accents of their superior.

“Give me the jolly-boat,” exclaimed the first lieutenant aloud, obviously addressing some of the crew nearest him, “and *I’ll* see what’s to be done—you know, Sir, there’s nothing like a *short* boat in a sea!”

This intimation was not lost upon those it was intended to reach.—Cheerfulness usurped the place of deep solicitude in the faces of half

a dozen of the nearest topmen, and as many voices simultaneously exclaimed—"I'll be one, Sir."

"There, Sir," said Haultaut, the first lieutenant, "I've a picked crew to my mind in a minute."

"With all my heart," said Sir Harry,— "away at once."

A race took place in running aft, to see who would be first on the taffrail into the jolly-boat, as she hung suspended across the ship's stern; and it is but justice to the zeal of those who arrived latest, to admit that they were foiled in their efforts only, by the superior agility of their competitors.

"Mind how you lower us," said Haultaut, jumping into the boat,— "and be careful and let go the after fall first, so as to let the boat come quickly head to sea."

The boatswain of the frigate, who superintended this service, watching for a lull, very opportunely, after the rolling past of a third

sea, lowered her down, and the crew, immediately disengaging her from the falls, cleared her from under the counter, and she was swept rapidly before the sea to leeward into the *Spitfire's* wake.

“ Give way, my boys,” cried the lieutenant, “ and round her quarter.”

A shock of horror burst from the crowded deck of the *Flora*, as the brig’s mainmast was observed, with its ponderous yards and gear, all enveloped in flame, falling over the quarter, and precipitating itself into the surge.

“ It’s all over with the jolly-boat,” exclaimed the master, “ she’s crushed beneath the wreck as sure as a gun.”

“ No, no, Mister Job—I saw her since.”

“ So did I, Sir,” said the boatswain, “ and there she is, all alive and kicking, to wind’ard of the wreck.”

All hope of accomplishing their humane object seemed, by this dreadful, but long expected accident, to be extinguished in the breasts of

those gallant volunteers. To approach the ship to leeward was impossible; as it turned out, the lee-after 'swifter' had unfortunately escaped the flames, and held the wreck to the hull, and such was the wild agitation of the heavy spars, heaving and sending in the raging sea, that had the sufferers lowered themselves down on them from the poop of the brig, no consideration could have induced Haultaut to risk the hazard of having his frail boat stove to pieces by coming in collision with the massive mast or spars. Nor were the brig's officers less sensible of the impotency of their humane efforts to relieve them. In such circumstances, desperation is often the mother of enterprize. Burton was observed to cast a wistful eye on the leadline, in momentary abstraction. Hasty, who was well aware of his fertility in resources, and the benevolence of his disposition, immediately divined his intention and exclaimed—

"Are you inclined to risk the part of life-

preserver?—it's not the *first* time you tried it with success—remember Dartmouth!"

That sound fell on his ear like a knell. A crowd of agonizing sensations rushed on his mind, and lent a reckless enthusiasm to his wavering resolve. As much of the line as necessary for his project was unwound off the reel, when hailing the people in the boat, so as to arrest their attention, he lowered himself over the stern, exclaiming—"I'll risk their preservation, or perish in the attempt!"

The next moment he was seen buffeting his way through the waves, and soon reached the boat; ere he was taken in, Hasty had attached the other extremity of the line to a hawser, hanging over the taffrail, which Burton soon hauled into the boat, and made fast to the head-sheets.

"All fast in the boat—haul in—haul in, to as short a scope as you can," said Haultaut.

Staunch, and his three companions, clapping on the hawser, the jolly-boat was brought as near

to the brig's stern as was considered to be safe.

“Here's shew the way !” said Hasty, gliding down the hawser, until the rope sinking by his weight, plunged in the coming wave, through which he was compelled to perform a submarine passage to the boat's bow, where, almost suffocated, he was lifted into the boat.

Damped, in some degree, by the experience of the first lieutenant, in his transit through the rude element, none of the remaining parties manifested that anxiety for precedence, which is so frequently discoverable at public assemblies. Staunch luckily had long since avowed his intention to be the last man. The amicable desire to *yield* the preference was, therefore, confined to Stowel, and the serjeant. The master had the advantage in years, and was sure to carry weight when it was a mere point of complaisance. Every thing conspired against poor Drill, and he commenced his descent in compliance with the fiat of his commander, and the will of fate ;

for he had not glided half way down the rope, ere a huge “ruffian billow,” with its curling top, struck him with such violence on the head, that, bereft of all sense, he abandoned his grasp, and was only seen heels upwards for a moment on its surface, ere he sunk for ever.

“Poor Drill! poor Drill!” groaned Staunch.

“I thought as much,” said the master, looking wistfully towards the spot, and measuring his words as though to give time for the fulfilment of his prediction. “I knew he was afraid. A sailor would have held on till—”

“Heaven defend you or me from such another sea!” said the captain, with emotion.

“Bear a hand—bear a hand! heave yourselves over,” bellowed the Flora’s lieutenant, “the wreck ’ill break adrift directly, and stave the boat to pieces.”

“Come, Stowel,” said Staunch, “you know my determination.”

Of that determination the master was long aware, and therefore giving up the point, he

flung himself on the rope, and with better fortune than his predecessor, arrived safe in the boat.

And now, having discharged the duties of humanity and his station—as a man and a hero—the commander of the brig stood alone, of all its gallant crew, on that poop of fire,—the scene to him always of endearment; and erst of triumph. Happily released from all responsibilities as to the safety of those committed to his charge, he was not appalled at feeling himself, of all his ship's company, singly—reserved from their immunity from danger; and still within the reach of awful fate. Rejoicing that his companions had happily escaped a peril which appeared inevitable by all human effort, he, for the first time, sighed a secret prayer for his individual safety; and committing his person to the waves, and his destiny to Providence, plunged in the deep, and was soon after rescued from the raging element by his faithful lieutenant. In consequence of his head coming violently in contact

with the boat's fore-foot, he was taken in perfectly senseless ; and only awoke to consciousness some hours after, under the care of a surgeon in the cabin of the *Flora*.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE RETURN.

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The approach of home  
After long travelling by land or water,  
Most naturally some small doubt inspires—  
A female family's a serious matter.

BYRON.

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IN consequence of the prevalence of a south westerly wind, the *Flora*, which had so providentially, as related, hove in sight when herself returning from a cruize, soon reached Plymouth Sound, where she was immediately boarded by the “guard-boat.” The intelligence conveyed by the latter on shore, that the frigate had on board the crew of one of his Majesty’s ships,

burnt at sea ; excited no ordinary interest on shore : and was immediately made the subject of a telegraphic communication. Before Sir Harry had landed to report his arrival at the admiral's office, which was precisely in forty-five minutes and a half from the time of the *Flora's* anchoring in the 'Sound,' however marvellous the assertion, the First Lord of the Admiralty, snugly seated by his sea-coal fire, at Whitehall, a distance of two hundred and nineteen miles off, was actually perusing the report of the nature and extent of the brig's calamity, as characteristically couched in what is now denominated semaphoric\* stenography.

" *Spitfire burnt—Bay Biscay—*

" *Crew saved—ex three—by Flora—*"

Nor let this celerity be imputed to that influence

\* We are aware of the anachronism here as to the mere term—neither the invention, nor the name were known at this period—such notification being made by telegraph.

implied by the adage that ill news flies apace: for had the intelligence been *vice versa*, that the *Spitfire* had blown up a French three-decker under the batteries of Brest, it may be presumed the triumph would be conveyed with equal dispatch, and certainly as much alacrity.

Amid all the bustle on board, in consequence of their arrival in port, it was observed that one person was seized with an uneasy restlessness, in which the officers of the *Flora*, delighted to reach harbour after a long cruise, as well as the officers of the *Spitfire*, seemed by no means disposed to participate. It would be silly to affect to conceal the name of this malcontent from our fair friends, who have no doubt already recognized in him their old acquaintance Burton. Amongst other subjects of perplexity, he seemed to have fallen out with a round jacket and blue waistcoat; which, though they fitted, to use a lively figure, like a purser's shirt on a handspike, never before struck him as unsymmetrical or unsuited to his rank. The honest

check, or the holland of dingy saffron dye, in consequence of repeated washings in pea-soup during a long cruize, appeared to his, now fastidious taste, quite unworthy to enwrap his person. A little skimming dish hat, too, had fallen into very undeserved contempt ; and he was observed bustling about the ship, endeavouring to affect an interchange with some of his friends for more suitable attire. This betrayal of unwonted vanity served to awaken suspicions that, though a *tar* afloat, he was a fop ashore ; and until the matter was cleared up by his communicative shipmates as to the state of his feelings, which was also corroborated by his immediate application to Sir Harry for a short leave of absence ; stating, that however unusual the application under such circumstances, very urgent reasons conspired to render it necessary. That officer was somewhat surprised by the request ; and in reply, reminded Burton of the necessity there was that all the officers of the Spitfire should hold themselves in readiness, as a court-martial

was sure to be ordered relative to the loss of that ship: that order might possibly be telegraphed down, and he must therefore decline granting any leave, except for a few hours. Here was a disappointment with a vengeance. The first suggestion of the moment was one altogether unworthy of him, which was to incur the imputation of adopting Gallican habits, and taking, what is known by the term, "*French leave.*"

Retiring from the captain's cabin, he paced up and down the half-deck with hurried, moody step.—With his arms crossed, and chin entrenched in the palm of his right hand, whose fingers frequently extricated themselves with difficulty from his firm-set teeth; he at intervals caught up snatches of a very favourite author with him, which his imagination parodied thus—

“ Passion lures me on—true;—but how if it cast me off by alluring me on?—What then?—Will it ensure my passion a return?—I fear not.—Will it propitiate her mother?—No.—

Will it conquer the veteran's scruples?—No.—Passion cannot give me rank then?—No.—Or another epaulette?—No.—If I go without leave, can I hope to get a ship again?—No.—If I sacrifice through it my commission, can it restore me?—No.—What is this passion?—A word—a breath.—Who hath it?—alas, I alone!—Does she feel it?—No.—Then she's insensible?—Yes—as though I were dead.—But does she not wish me still among the living?—I don't know—Why?—because her detracting mother won't suffer her—therefore I'll think of it no longer, or my commission will soon be a mere scutcheon, and so ends all my prospects."

In fact, if it had not been for Mister Burton's classical recollections, his commission at this moment would have been in very imminent danger: and he had to acknowledge himself, like many other well informed young gentlemen, indebted to his literary acquirements for a prudence beyond his years. So our young friend, whilst he postponed his departure for these

powerful reasons, determined that no time should be lost in preparing for his pilgrimage to the shrine of his devotion the moment he should be released from duty.

Contrary to the custom of good Catholics in the olden times, when expeditions of this kind were made to Lough-Deargh, Canterbury, or the Holy Sepulchre, as penances for secret guilt or unatoned crime,—and the offender disguised himself in a dandy-grey-russet suit, with a suitably sober garniture of cockle-shells—taking especial care to accommodate the peas in his pumps with all possible room, so as to avoid the anguish of their coming in contact with the blistered sole of the foot; our pilgrim adopted an exactly opposite course.—The most fashionable tailor Plymouth-Dock afforded, was employed to equip him, with a plain suit, *nauticè*, shore-going clothes.—The Hoby of the port encased his well-proportioned limbs in the tightest Spanish leather, and a *chapelier* ‘ from Bond-street, London,’ added all the nameless graces of the

west end, to the hat, which completed his costume for a pilgrimage to his Lady of Loretto.

The prognostications of Sir Harry were soon fulfilled, by the receipt of orders from the Admiralty, for holding a court-martial on the captain, officers, and ship's company, on the occasion of the loss of his majesty's late sloop-of-war, *Spitfire*.—As all the necessary parties were in attendance, the business of investigation was quickly compleated, and the explanation proved so very satisfactory to the court, that it not only acquitted them of all blame; but the president on returning the captain his sword, complimented him, in very flattering terms, upon his able conduct, and the high state of discipline displayed by his crew, under the trying circumstances attending the destruction of their vessel by fire.

The minutes of the court-martial being transmitted to the Admiralty, together with the sentence; enough was disclosed, on the face of

the examination of witnesses annexed, to reveal to their lordships, independently of the laudable and novel precaution of a 'Fire Bill,' so suitable and desirable under all circumstances of this calamitous nature; abundant reason to justify the panegyric pronounced on the conduct of the captain, his officers, and crew. The result of such testimonials was as favourable as could be expected; and, in a few days after, Staunch had the satisfaction of receiving an appointment from the 'Board,' to a captured French man-of-war brig, just purchased into the service, which he was ordered 'to commission forthwith'—taking with him the officers and crew of the late *Spitfire*; whose name the newly purchased brig was also directed to bear.

Long ere the receipt of this agreeable intelligence, Burton had, with as much speed as a pair of post-horses could carry him, taken his flight across the country. And now left entirely to himself, his imagination was at perfect liberty to run its wildest career, and the quick

succession of his inward thoughts might be said to equal the rapid transit of external objects. Yet such was the state of abstraction in which he sat in the chaise, that he was neither conscious of the perpetual and momentary change of objects presented to the eye; or of the beauty of the prospects, both by sea and land, which are so frequent in this delightful drive across that part of the coast of Devonshire.—Wrapped up in his anticipations of exstacy in meeting again with Emily, the post-boy seemed sluggish, and the horses slow, though they often went down hill at full gallop:—and the rattling of the carriage-wheels over the pavement of Modbury market-place, reminded him, for the first time, that he had accomplished a great part of his journey without ever taking into his consideration, a very important objection to the precipitate haste of his flight—an objection which his passion had hitherto induced him altogether to overlook.—A sort of argumentative soliloquy was the result, of which, con-

sidering that we had no opportunity of taking it down verbatim, the substance was nearly as follows:—

“ Why all this speed ? ” said he ; “ may I not be in too great haste ? ought I not to have written to the old captain to acquaint him with the accident which brings me again into his neighbourhood, and afforded him an opportunity of giving me an invitation ? Besides, it was the more necessary, in consequence of the abruptness of my departure, and the odd affair of the hat ; aye, but I set all right by my letter to herself.”—Had he known how that selfsame letter had set all *wrong*, by its falling into Mrs. Crank’s hands, it might have altered his impression as to his chance of being welcomed at the cottage ; but of this he was ignorant, and, therefore, in the same strain, continued—

“ How am I to account for my appearance here, whilst I neglect to visit my friends and family ? But that’s no person’s business—I’m so far my own master. The old man, ’tis true

has given me *some* encouragement, but then—it was conditional. Instead of being better in circumstances, I am now worse—without even a ship—and burnt out. Her mother, too, will be more than ever hostile for this reason. What's to be done? Would to Heaven I could see her alone! That would be an opportunity worth a world! What an embarrassing rencontre will it prove, if that sanctified, selfish woman, is alone at the cottage, and treats my visit as a morning call, or refuses to let her daughter be seen. Perhaps, too—after posting all this way, they may be all from home."

Almost every one of these arguments were decidedly of a nature to dissuade him from pursuing his journey, and might have induced another man to turn his horses' heads in the direction of his native place; but Burton, strange to say, found in them a pretext for continuing his flight with unabated expedition.

But the best laid plans are often not half so felicitous in completing our wishes, as the un-

premeditated result of chance ; which, for ladies in love, and gentlemen in Burton's situation, so often works wonders. What that chance reserved for Burton to improve was, will be detailed with greater propriety in a subsequent chapter.

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## CHAPTER IX.

## PROS AND CONS.

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The genius, and the mortal instruments,  
Are then in council; and the state of man,  
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then  
The nature of an insurrection.

SHAKSPEARE.

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AN apology is certainly due to the ladies, for the discourteous neglect with which we have treated that part of the fair sex, resident at Camperdown Cottage. But calamitous events, and accidents, have so thickened in the last hundred pages, that any details of the even tenor of their blameless lives, if intermingled, would have appeared quite out of place.

Nothing could certainly be more unsatisfactory to both Mrs. Crank and her daughter, than the manner of Burton's departure from the cottage. The causes of their dissatisfaction with his conduct were as different, as the motives and tempers of the parties concerned. The reasons for Mrs. Crank's displeasure have been already enumerated ; nor will those of the younger lady longer remain a secret, when it is known that, pursuant to her mother's original policy with respect to Burton's note to Emily, the latter never was aware of its receipt ; or even of its existence. Of the disingenuousness of such a practice ; of its apparent treachery to a young and artless mind ; or its tendency to weaken the respect due to a parent, or alienate the affections of a child, whose feelings are thus outraged by a breach of confidence, which would never be tolerated between total strangers ; it will become these unpretending pages, which, unlike the effusions of our female literary con-

temporaries, affects not the didactic style, to be altogether silent.

Not content with this breach of confidence and insincerity, she, in a similar way, obtained the letter written to her daughter, by the lieutenant, when cruizing off Scilly, previously to the burning of the brig. To this act she was impelled, by the same motives which governed her conduct on a former occasion ; calculating that the best mode to prevent a smouldering fire from bursting into a flame, was not to stir the embers ; and that nothing was more likely to break off a very improper and impolitic attachment, as she pronounced this to be, than to keep both parties, as much as possible, in ignorance, as to the nature of the sentiments they might reciprocally entertain for each other. In this treatment of her child, she was borne out by the conduct of other mothers of her acquaintance ; who, in their alarm lest their daughters should cherish an attachment inju-

rious to their interests, have imprudently forgotten, that the poison of passion is best neutralized by the assuasive antidote of cool, dispassionate reasoning; that to convince the mind, is safer than to control the will; and that ingenuous confidence, and affectionate remonstrance, whilst they soften the apparent rigour of authority, will often prove its most legitimate and powerful auxiliaries.

In one instance, at least, Mrs. Crank's prudence overshot itself: for the singularity of Burton's disappearance, immediately after his being closeted with her uncle, especially when coupled with his ardent avowal but a few minutes before, seemed to warrant any other inference than that his silence could ever be attributed by Emily to his indifference. In coming to this conclusion she, at the same time, became equally convinced, that his conduct required that explanation which she was surprised it had not received. That the *tête-à-tête* between the lieutenant and her uncle had, for

some reason, been the cause of his abrupt disappearance, she had no doubt: what that reason was she could not even conjecture, for she had good grounds to believe he possessed a share of her uncle's esteem and regard. That the invitation of the old gentleman to a private conference had some reference to her; and most probably to the posture in which Tiller had discovered Burton, when ardently avowing his attachment, she strongly suspected: as well as that, under circumstances of such excitement, Burton must have explained to her uncle the state of his feelings in justification of his conduct. Every minute circumstance connected with that passionate avowal,—his retreat,—the forgotten hat,—the absence of all explanation proved incontestibly that some violent emotion had suddenly subdued his energy of mind; and deprived him even of his recollection. All this served to prove the intenseness of his feelings: nor could she longer hesitate to decide that some important disclosure had then

taken place, of whose nature she was totally ignorant, with reference to her uncle's and mother's intentions towards herself; or that he had been absolutely forbidden to see her again. Yet it was not probable such an interdiction would have originated with Crank himself; and she saw no reason to suspect her mother could possibly be aware of Burton's avowal, as she had had no opportunity of being previously made acquainted with the only circumstance which could have excited any alarm. Nay, she recollected that her mother had even entered the room at the moment, and given Mr. Burton a more than ordinarily civil reception: here then she was destined to be foiled in her attempt to unravel the mystery following this train of reasoning. And it was only in consequence of reiterately returning again and again to the subject, that she was at length compelled to take up another clue to assist her in explaining it. Nor will it be considered extraordinary, that this course should have been the latest pursued,

when it is recollected how difficult it is to bring us, under any circumstances, to inculpate our own conduct.

And now she set herself, with infinite pains, to examine if ever she had, in the course of their acquaintance, betrayed any conduct, which might possibly bear an unfavourable explanation; or set her before him in an unamiable light. She believed she had almost too markedly shewn a preference for his intelligent society; and that she felt gratified by the attention paid her, and the information she reaped from his conversation. All this was certainly true: but she began to perceive that his assiduities had been so unremitting, his solicitude so undisguised, that he doubtless felt he had a right to expect their object should not be misunderstood. Here, therefore, she imagined she might have been unjust, in neither treating him as an admitted lover; or discarding him as a suitor altogether. She recollects instances in which she feared she had repelled his attentions, where

she now felt she might have abated something of her maidenly pride, without any impeachment of her motives:—more especially when she recollect ed the great debt of gratitude she owed him for his gallantry, and noble disregard of personal risk, in snatching her from inevitable death. All this, she perceived, required more than cold acknowledgment, and *formal* avowal of esteem. She might in this respect then have been to blame.—He must have been aware of the weight of obligation which he had imposed by this generous act; if his preceding attentions were altogether unworthy of exciting her serious regard—and she feared, she must have sunk proportionably in his esteem, as she appeared to be deficient in gratitude. She would fain have sheltered herself from this self-reproach, in assuming that she had not been hitherto called on to pursue a more candid course, by distinctly explaining her sentiments towards him. On mature reflection, she felt convinced that period which

called on her imperatively to throw off her reserve, had certainly arrived, the moment he himself made that ardent profession of attachment, which had been so very unseasonably interrupted by the sudden irruption of old Tiller. It was in vain she sought to justify herself for thus having withheld her confidence, from one who had so unreservedly and generously committed himself, by the disclosure of his own feelings respecting her. The presence of the domestic, it was true, might absolve her from the necessity of then making any explicit avowal respecting his proposal, whether of acceptance or rejection ; but a single look might have been sufficient for either purpose ; whether to confirm, or repel his hopes : and that look she now felt was his due, in justice to his, and to her own feelings.

Such was the conclusion which our fair casuist formed : and who can more expertly handle a sophism than a female, as to her own conduct ? But however accessible to reasoning, or candid

in these omissions, she still felt confident she had nothing to upbraid herself with since his departure; whilst of *his* silence, she imagined she had just reason to complain. Ignorant as she was, of the real state of things, she could hardly fail to construe that silence into a proof of the wayward fickleness, which her mother had often assured her she would invariably find the attribute of his sex. Owing to the kind offices of her friend, Miss Wilson, and the corroborative evidence of certain gossips, who in every country place are found circulating, with so much zest, all the little tittle-tattle collected with maliciously industrious espionage, the attentions and frequent calls of the young officer were no secret amongst her acquaintance. These persons, with a license peculiar to meddling, inquisitive spirits, (always proportionably irksome as the social circle is circumscribed,) had rather unjustifiably pronounced Burton the acknowledged lover of the old commodore's niece. As he possessed both an agreeable person, and superior

accomplishments, her vanity was rather flattered by his preference ; and the gallant exposure of his life for her deliverance, it may be presumed, had already kindled feelings of envy in the breasts of many of her fair friends, who felt zealous of her early distinction, and a preference so flattering. Here then, it must be admitted, she felt herself placed in a singular dilemma, from whence young ladies, much her senior, and of more matured experience, would have felt it difficult to extricate themselves. She was committed to a certain extent in public opinion. She had, and she had not a lover. 'Tis true he had avowed his attachment: she, however, had not accepted him in the character of a suitor. Hence she felt that she could not fairly, or with justice, charge him with neglect; inasmuch as she had but permitted his communicating by letter; and that permission had been couched in terms, too general and vague, for him to conceive himself even favoured by any distinct or unequivocal preference.

It is the habit very generally with women, after collocating the arguments on either side of a question, to determine that those which are most germain and consentaneous with their natural bent or disposition, preponderate. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Emily, whose heart might be said to be disengaged, should be induced to adopt the conclusion that she had rather disingenuously concealed her sentiments from a man, whose candour and sincerity entitled him to more explicitness on her part; and that, '*under existing circumstances*,' his silence was not so much to blame.

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## CHAPTER X.

## CONCEITS OF SCIENCE.

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This is the way physicians mend or end us,  
Secundum artem.

BYRON.

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IN the affairs of this world, there are certain adages which are thrust as earnestly down men's throats as we do coin of the realm into our pockets, without inquiring whether they are sterling, but accepting them merely on the credit of their exterior; imagining, to keep up the simile, that the more their surfaces are smoothed by attrition, or by passing through a number of hands, they are proportionably likely to be genuine. Of

this class is the very trite adage—"the more haste the less speed," the truth of which, on the present occasion, was ordained to be shaken by the experience of an individual, whom we left some dozen pages back, posting like lightning across the Devonshire hills, on the wings of enforced expedition.

Not that an ordinary observer, or a stickler for these truisms, would not contend, that the counsel contained in this maxim, received, in Burton's case, an additional confirmation by the result of all this haste—for although certain it is, he fell short of his destination, notwithstanding the speed with which he travelled, the interruption he experienced proved ultimately the means of gratifying the wish nearest his heart.

About three o'clock in the afternoon of this day, Tiller, who had been despatched by Mrs. Crank to the doctor's for a fresh supply of digestive pills—or, as Tom termed them, "gum ticklers," and "stomach stirrers," perceived a

dense crowd collected around Senna's shop, the windows of which were in vain blockaded against the curious intrusion of the younger and more agile part of the rustic assemblage, who nimbly climbed on the shoulders of the elder to peep over the blinds—A confused buzzing murmur ran through the crowd, compounded of exclamations and interrogations which are usually uttered by persons congregated by the rumour of some ill-defined and unexpected catastrophe.

We are not misanthropical enough to agree with *La Bruyere*, notwithstanding the anxiety and overwhelming interest which is daily evinced by multitudes to witness the expiring struggle of a culprit at his execution, that this anxiety arises from a perverted taste, or cruel propensity in our nature;—but, certain it is, that that never-to-be-sated feeling of curiosity formed the far greater part of the excitement in this instance among the group now collected about the doctor's door.

“ Lard, how paile he looks !” exclaimed one

of these mounted myrmidons of curiosity—who, like “Peeping Tom of Coventry,” in the case of the Lady *Godiva*, was enjoying a gratification interdicted to those less nimble than himself—“He looks as if he was going to faint.”

“Why not give him a drop a drink?” vociferated a little bandy-legged mate of a merchantman, who seemed, from the *rum* complexion of his nose, to have imbibed the idea that liquor was a sovereign remedy for the accidents, as well as the ills of life.

“My eyes—there they be zlitting the zleeve of his beautivul coat!” said this elevated observer.

“Dang it, what zhame to zarve the poor zoul zo!” exclaimed a third.

“Tut, tut, you fool, how can they help it—if your arm was broke, you woudn’t like to have it hauled out of the socket with the sleeve,” rejoined the mate.

Tiller, who felt himself a man of importance, and whose curiosity was somewhat excited by

the reports of the “look-out men” aloft ; rather roughly pushed aside those who were nearest him, exclaiming—

“Stand aside—make a lane there!—let’s see what’s amiss.”

He now began knocking violently at the door, indignant that bolt or bar should be drawn against a person of his consequence.

“Come, bear a fist,” said he. “I want a box o’ your stomach-stirrers for my missess.”

This well known voice appeared to have the same influence as the charmed words “Open Seseme,” of Ali-Baba ; and the door, as if by enchantment, instantly flew open. What Tiller saw, appeared to produce a surprise, certainly of another kind, but nearly equal to that experienced by the Persian himself, upon the discovery of the fabled riches of the cavern. He certainly saw enough to make him, with all possible expedition, “*bout ship*,” as he termed it, “and let fly his top gallant sheets,” as a signal for an enemy in sight

This manœuvre, for Tom delighted in his heart and soul to do every thing ship-shape ; he accomplished by holding his handkerchief by the upper corners high above his head, leaving the lower loose, to fly and flap in the wind ; he occasionally accompanied the signal with a ‘phew,’ ‘phew,’ or a shrill short whistle, as much as to say,—“ here’s a piece of business.”—In his hurry to reach his master he very nearly upset his wife in the kitchen, who rewarded his civility by a slap of a bunch of sausages on his blind eye.—He had no time for private resentment.—Like Themistocles of old, he only thought of the public, and of the common enemy : and he rushed without the least ceremony into the parlour, where the old gentleman sat, spectacles on nose, conning his code of signals.

“ I made the signal, Sir,” said Tom, “ but you didn’t see it.”

“ What signal ?”

“ Why here’s the devil to pay, and no pitch

hot, — I never had such a job in my life to break the line."

" What line?" said Crank, who in more senses than one, found himself already *at sea*.

" Why, the crowd round the doctor's door.— Bless your heart, it's more like *Recall-day* at Portsmouth Dock-yard, nor anything else.— 'Where are you shoving,' says one—'Rig-in your studden-sail-booms,' says another—'What the devil do *you* do crushing a body?' cries a woman with a child in her arms, and big as a butt with another—'What do the likes of *you* do here with those babys?' thought I,—for you see, Sir, in a crowd o' that sort, a fellow mustn't give *too* much lip."

" I wish, for *my* sake, you always thought yourself in a crowd."

" 'An't I going,' says I, 'for my misses,' " continued Tom,—" 'Why, you old fool,' says a fellow—'your misses!—it's not *your* Misses.' —'Well, then,' says I, 'my missess' man.'—

'Kase you know, Sir, I couldn't say *her* mid-wife, you know.—' *Your Misses' man?*—your *young* Misses' man,' said that saucy cod-catching chap, as I bundled out o' the door one night.—He, you know, Sir, as brought the letter, and wanted to see Miss Emily, the night afore the brig sailed."

" Well?" said Crank, betraying an impatient curiosity.

" Well, Sir, as soon as I forces my way into the shop—who should I see, spread-out like a corpse, on a grating—though I believe 'twas a shutter too, yes it was, for 'twas more like a hatch nor a grating."

" Well, go on, man!"

" Well, who should I see but that there young blade,—"

" What young blade?" interrupted Crank, with increased interest.

" Why, that there Mister—Mister—I can't mind his name at the moment—that there—

that there leaftenant that jumped overboard after Miss Emily."

"Gracious God! Why surely you don't mean Mister Burton?"

"That's the man—the dientical man!"

"Impossible, Thomas — there's not a pen-  
nant in the port—no man-o'-war arrived."

"Oh! as for the matter o' that, Sir, the craft's  
capsized."

"*Capsized!*"

"Yes, Sir, the helmsman was groggy—and  
this here Mister Burton, you know, Sir, was  
hove clean out of the quarter-gallery window,  
and found lying on his beam-ends in a ditch,  
with his shoulder slipt out o' the step."

"Found in a *ditch*?"

"Yes, Sir, the boy was cracking-on too much  
canvas, and over she goes."

"The boy!—The helmsman!—didn't you say  
the ship was capsized?—What the deuce should  
bring a man-o'-war in a ditch?"

“ I doesn’t know, Sir,—though I’ve seen, too, afore now, a man-o’-war swimming in a dyke —but, to be sure, ‘twas in Holland —”

“ D—— the dykes, and the Dutch--I wish you were drowned in Hollands.”

“ Well, Sir, a man might sink in worse swissel.”

“ Stand clear, you foggy-headed fool.—Give me my hat and stick,” cried Crank, flinging the signal-book aside, and tugging, as usual when strongly excited, at the waistband of his small clothes—*I'll* soon come at the truth of it.”

“ You’ll find it true enough.—Didn’t I see with my own eyes Mister Senna rigging-out a parbuckle purchase over the back of a kitchen-chair to haul the heel o’ the limb back in its place ?”

“ Well,—don’t say a word to the women—Come along with me, and clear the coast.”

Clapping on his hat in his hurry ‘upon three hairs,’ the warm-hearted old veteran was seen trudging down to the village, with an eagerness

of manner, and length of stride that quite astonished the natives.—Yielding to the impetuosity of the old officer's charge pike in hand, the crowd was observed falling back on either side, so as to open a passage to the apothecary's door:—whilst the imps and urchins notified his approach to the inmates, by exclaiming—“Here's the admiral—here's the commodore !”

In the interval prior to Tiller's re-appearance, an unsuccessful effort had been made to reduce the dislocation by the pharmacopolist and his assistant,—an uncouth, square-built, red-headed rustic, who had been taken from his father's plough in consequence of an unexpected change of fortune, to wield a pestle, and obtain a summary qualification as a professional man, to maim and mutilate his fellow-creatures by Act of Parliament, and according to law.

In a moment after the alarm had been given out of doors, the veteran appeared within.—A look sufficed him to recognize his young friend, however disguised in his present *déshabillé*.

“ ‘Tis he ! ‘tis he, poor fellow,” said Crank, —then carefully approaching the patient, whom he perceived, from the expression of his countenance, to be in too much pain to endure one of those violent demonstrations of cordiality not uncommon with the veteran, he rested both hands upon his cane, leaning forward, and looked for some time piteously in his face.

“ I’m sorry, my dear boy,”—said he, “ truly sorry to see you in this sad plight.—My Thomas gave me a terrible fright about you—but I could hardly understand him.—He told me the *craft* was capsized !”

“ No, Sir,—bur—burnt,” replied the lieutenant, who, from the effect of pain, was scarcely able to articulate.

“ Burnt !—worse and worse !—Where ?”

“ In the Bay — down — down to — the—water’s——” ‘edge,’ he would have said, but that Senna edged in an order to his servant for a glass of water, remarking, “ that this *inco-*

*herence* of manner was a more dangerous symptom, than even the *thirst* he experienced."

"God bless me!" said Crank, "this blind old blockhead came up with a cock-and-a-bull story, and told me he was found in a ditch."

"And so he *was*, Sir," said Tiller, warmly, nettled at the imputation cast on his veracity.—"But I suppose now," added Tom, in a half whisper—"he'll deny it in *course* if it suits him."

"Blown up then?" inquired Crank, inquisitively.

To this interrogatory, Burton gave a look of acquiescence, and feebly uttering—"Bay of Biscay," fell back in a swoon against Senna's assistant.

"Impossible!" exclaimed Crank.—"Another sky-rocket-Jack, by all that's brave.—What! blown up in the Bay of Biscay—and dropped in a ditch at Dartmouth!"

“ Burton, Burton,” cried the veteran, with great emotion, letting fall his stick, and endeavouring to raise the lieutenant’s drooping head.—“ Ah ! the poor fellow’s off, I b’lief.—’Gad, I wonder he wasn’t shattered to pieces.—Any body else saved ?”

“ You’ll excuse me,” formally interrupted our Hypocrates—“ this is no common case—we must not permit too many questions—for though the patient be in a *sycope* at present, the noise of speaking, and the sound, you must be aware, by its oral vibration externally, acting *internally* on the brain, disorganizes the a—medullary substance by nervous action, and occasions those a—febrile symptoms generally through the system, so very desirable, in cases of this sort, to repress.”

“ Where *am I?*” sighed Burton, who appeared slowly re-animating.

“ Here you are, my boy—near your friend—d— it, it does my heart good to hear your voice again.”

“I hope you’ll break it by degrees,” said Burton, hesitatingly.

“We shall *break* nothing—it’s a simple operation in able hands.—Ah, now he’s coming to himself we shall be able to proceed *secundum artem*.” Though no doubt a town practitioner would have preferred the moment of insensibility as most favourable for reducing the dislocation.—“Perhaps,” continued Senna, “you’ll favour me by lifting your hand to the head.”

“Lift!—I could as soon lift the Eddystone light-house.”

“Ah!—it’s exactly as I suspected—I’m seldom mistaken,” said Senna, repeating the painful treatment he had occasioned his patient to undergo, prior to Crank’s arrival.—“The case is clearly a displacing of the head of the *humerus*.—It’s our object to endeavour to reduce it.—The last case of luxation which I treated was, I confess, a troublesome one.”

Burton, whose anticipations at this moment could not be very comfortable, from the history

given of his case, could not suppress an exclamation of pain, in consequence of the rough manner in which this man of science suddenly attempted to raise his arm.

“ Surely I don’t hurt you ?” said Senna.

“ Indeed, Sir, you do—that put me to very exquisite pain.”

“ Oh that’s quite impossible !—Believe me, my good friend, it’s mere apprehension of mind, which a—sympathizes with *the* a—general disorganization of the frame—you must permit *me* to be the best judge in these cases.”

“ That’s d——d good !” exclaimed the angry veteran.—“ It’s not *your* arm that’s unshipped.—But feeling, I’ve heard’s no fellow.”

The learned operator, unmindful of this interruption, continued oscillating the patient’s arm up and down, remarking, with great self-complaisancy, that—“ the advance of science had introduced very important improvements in the treatment of cases of this nature,” whilst

the subject of his experiment winced with acute and excruciating pain.

“ Holloa, Senna ! one would think you’d got hold of a pump-handle,” said the captain.

“ Pardon me, these muscular a—movements are merely experimental, to ascertain the extent of the injury inflicted—expert practitioners never stand upon trifles.”

“ Trifles d’ye call ’em !” cried Crank.

“ Just so.”

“ Oh ! for God’s sake man, mind what you’re about !” roared Burton.

“ I perceive we must have recourse to the chair again—a simpler operation than the method of the *ambe*.—You’ve heard of the invention ? Freke’s.”\*

“ No more of your *freaks* now,” said the captain—“ Come, bear-a-hand and ship the man’s shoulder at once.”

\* Ambe, an instrument for reducing a dislocated shoulder, improved on by Surgeon Freke, formerly of Bartholomew’s Hospital.

The ill success of a fresh attempt to accomplish the operation, occasioned another groan from Burton ; and a remonstrance as to the pain to which he appeared to be unnecessarily put.

“ I’m perfectly aware,” said Senna, “ some sympathetic uneasiness may possibly proceed from the a—swollen state of the a—adjacent muscles—but to pronounce it *pain*, is a positive *profanation* of the term.”

After repeated efforts, in which it might be questioned whether the pertinacity of the operator, or the resignation of the patient, were most to be wondered at, the shoulder, more by main force than dexterity, was replaced in its proper situation :—though Senna failed not to enlarge on the success of the latter. to which he was solely disposed to attribute the favourable result.

The moment after its completion, the old man, with the most unaffected cordiality, congratulated

the patient that things were no worse ; and whilst expressing great anxiety to be acquainted with the cause of his accident, prudently abstained from entering into details at present, as he said he was “anxious to get him into sick quarters.”

Here Burton hinted at taking up his quarters at the nearest inn—a proposition which seemed to excite both surprise and displeasure on the part of his friend.

“ Tut, tut, man—I’ll hear of no such thing. We’ll sling you a cot at the cottage till you’re ready to report yourself out of the doctor’s list,”—then turning round to Tiller, he added—“ Come, Thomas—let’s make for home and rig-out a room for him.”

Burton’s apologies for the trouble which this would occasion in the family, were overruled as soon as made by his arbitrary but kind friend ; who once more shook him by the hand, and left him in a stupor of astonishment at perceiving,

that what he had considered as a most untoward accident, was likely to procure for him that which he had never ventured to anticipate ; namely, being received as an inmate and resident at Camperdown.

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## CHAPTER XI.

## TURN IN, OR TURN OUT.

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The rich blockhead's store  
Oft opens the door,  
At which poverty's fate is 'turn out.'

KENNEY.

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"WHAT is all that noise about?" impatiently exclaimed Mrs. Crank, who, in consequence of a loud knocking against the wall of the adjoining chamber, had been rather unseasonably interrupted in devotional exercises; or, perhaps, the duties of the toilette, for which the former served daily as a pretext to retire, about this hour in the afternoon.

“It’s the master, Ma’am,” said Tiller, as he passed her door, who had already determined to avail himself of the first opportunity afforded him of throwing off from his own shoulders any participation in what he considered little less than surrendering a footing on their own deck to an enemy.—“It’s the master, Ma’am: we’re nailing up a clit for the head clew of the cot.”

“What for?—who is to occupy that room?” inquired the matron.

“A disabled man,” snappishly returned Crank, from withinside, in a voice which would have reached the further end of a longer corridor than Camperdown Cottage could boast.

“A *man*!—and so near my apartment—what *man*?” cried the lady, in an emulously elevated tone.

“A friend in distress!” promptly bellowed the old gentleman.—“You’re always talking about charity and benevolence—we’ll now see if you’ve got any.”

This was an alarm to her pride; an insult to

her professions—it was blowing the clarion of war. In she came—her eyes beaming indignation, her port betokening defiance, and armed in “all the panoply divine” of that female weapon, eloquence, she stood conscious of her powers in the door-way, where Crank, and his factotum, were employed in their preparations; and thus repelled the insolent aggression.

“I know not who may be the object of your bounty in this instance; I can easily imagine your choice will be a proof of your prejudices, rather than your philanthropy—some sailor, or broken-down comrade, I suppose?—But I do think, brother, you might content yourself with giving away your property to persons of their loose habits, without bringing them into your house, and forcing their *odious* society upon me and my daughter.”

“Hoity, toity!—here’s a breeze! How did *you* know all this—who told you?” said Crank, imagining the secret of his solicitude had transpired.—“If the cloth don’t assist one another,

who will?—Look at the Articles of War—what do they say?—‘Assist a known friend in view’—there’s charity in earnest.—Suppose you had been blown up at sea, and dropped in a ditch, wouldn’t you flock to your *meetingers*?—I’ll warrant you would; but it all comes of your dislike to the man.”

“Dislike?—Who can you mean?—I confess I can’t conjecture.”

“Why, Burton, to be sure.”

“Burton!—*that* wretch!” said she.

“Aye—he’s now down at Senna’s; and devilish bad, too, I can tell you.”

“Well, Sir, this may be your charity—I call it insanity!—If he enters here, after what has passed, our remaining here is impossible!”

“Why, bless you,” cried Crank, without suffering the dispute to make him relax in his preparations for the invalid’s comfortable accommodation—“the man’s half dead!”

“So much the worse; he is likely to remain

the longer on our hands—but, after the lengths he has gone, it would be closing my eyes to my daughter's ruin to stay an hour after he became an inmate."

"Well, but softly, now—hearken to reason," said Crank, pulling her gently into the room, whilst he shut the door cautiously, Tiller continuing, all the while, to thump manfully with a hammer at a brass-headed hook, which was slowly progressing through the wall—"hearken to reason."

"*Mister Crank*," said she, laying a most unamiable emphasis on a title which she knew was peculiarly obnoxious to the feelings of the veteran—"Mister Crank, if you have any thing private to communicate, let that noise cease, and its author retire," and so saying, she brushed past him with the air of one determined to keep her word.

"Thomas—stand fast awhile—suppose you go and overhaul the cot, and see none of the clews are stranded —It wouldn't do, you know,

in his present state, to let him come down by the lump."

Thomas, before the conclusion of this sentence, had already anticipated, and partly obeyed the unwilling intimation, and retired with a full intention of not appearing again until especially summoned ; from which, we may safely infer, that faithful dependant was of opinion that the difference of his situation in life did not disqualify him to sit on a council of state in family matters ; or from being admitted to the confidence of his superiors.

" And now," said the matron, with studied and ceremonious stateliness, " whilst you talk to me of hearkening to reason, what possible reason can you adduce for bringing this young man into your family, after *all* that has occurred. What will our neighbours say of it ?—What will the world think ?"

" The world !—a wide word that—what cares the world for all Dartmouth, and all that's in it ;—a drop o' water in the ocean. But as for

the young man, he's as innocent as a child.—You were always alarmed; but I told you there was nothing in it; and if there was, too, you ought to know there's nothing more likely than opposition to bring them foul of one another.”

“But what *I* want to know is, how the profligate can again shew his face *here*? Has he attempted to account for his former conduct?” said she, pacing the room in great agitation—“Has he attempted to explain the object of that odious letter? or the reason of his abrupt departure?”

“Egad, it’s the way with him, I believe—for his *arrival* is still more abrupt—by all I can learn, he came here like a sky-rocket.”

“All which,” interposed the lady, “convinces me he is one of those singular characters, whose acquaintance can be no acquisition.”

“Now, as to that, we differ—but I have pledged my word he shall be welcome, and can’t go back; besides, he’s so ill—I couldn’t have the

heart to drive a dog from my door in his shattered condition."

"That," said the female casuist, "would be an argument for admitting the *plague*."

"What the devil do you know about the plague?—Are you fool enough to believe it's contagious. I've been at Smyrna, and all over the Levant, and never was afraid of it; but, if that's all, hoist the *yellow* flag, and put him in quarantine here. Let Tiller attend him until he's clean bills of health."

"It's not his health, Sir, I allude to—'tis the moral taint of his society—the plague-spot of libertinism that I dread."

"Now, there again, sister, you're wrong.—Give him his run; he's unable to do any harm if he wished; which I don't think he does. But, mark me! Young people hardly ever fall in love unless you go between 'em, and put such stuff in their heads by trying to keep 'em asunder."

"Your sentiments, brother, are singular;—they are your own:—but mine have a right to

be respected. I see nothing but mischief likely to follow this step—and resolved I am that—”

This colloquy was interrupted by the blooming Emily herself, who came smiling into the room, and observing their attitudes, which indicated strong opposition of sentiment, appeared not more at a loss to conceive the cause of their present disagreement, than to account for the active preparations, made and making, for fitting up a room hitherto unoccupied.—

“ What new inmate do you expect ?” said she ; “ I should think it was no *lady*, by these singular preparations.”

“ Not more singular than the occasion !” scornfully answered her mother.

“ I’m sorry it *is* so singular, for the poor fellow’s own sake,” said Crank—“ but it’s all the fortune o’ war—afloat to-day—aground to-morrow !”

Emily, after looking alternately in their faces, observed—

“ Well, when this mysterious personage ap-

pears, it is to be presumed the *incognito* will be at an end—at present you both seem determined to keep the secret.”

“ You shall know all, my dear, in good time; but at present I wish to be alone with your uncle.”

“ Oh, there’s no occasion for her absence—we are only talking about Burton, who has met with a sad accident, and landed in our neighbourhood—he’s coming here to take up his quarters—”

“ He is *no* such thing!” exclaimed Mrs. Crank, with determination; whilst a deep hue of crimson suffused the fine features of Emily. The exclusive dominion of the rose was as quickly usurped by the lily; for a moment afterwards an ashy paleness overspread her countenance. This rapid transition of feeling escaped not the watchful and penetrating eye of her mother, who failed not to infer that her varied emotion indicated as much of indignation as of surprise.

“ I tell you what it is, sister,—I’m always captain of my *own* ship. So the less there’s said on that subject the better. The fellow now requires a friend—and *damme* if I’ll desert him !”

A momentary hectic in Emily’s complexion, seemed to indicate that she was suffering an internal struggle; whilst her mother refrained from making any reply, lest, in the course of their contention, Emily should be put in possession of that explanation, which it had been all along her mother’s policy to prevent. Her malignant star, however, prevailed.—Crank’s eagerness to defend his friend triumphed over the resolution the reader will recollect he once had jocularly formed, to keep them both in ignorance as to the real state of Burton’s sentiments; and he burst forth with an interrogatory, which terrified one, and surprised the other.

“ Hasn’t the young fellow been always honourable, and above-board ?—That *letter* to the

child, too, which you made such a fuss about, was natural enough—if you knew *all* I said to him on the subject."

"What letter, uncle?" exclaimed Emily, thinking her prudence impeached—"on my honour—on my most sacred word—I never received a letter from him, or any man breathing!" accompanying this assurance with a flow of tears, which might with greater propriety be attributed to the indignation she felt at being suspected of entertaining a clandestine correspondence, than to any other well-defined feeling. Here the old man affectionately took her by the hand, crying—

"Cheer up, love—cheer up—no one suspects you—your mother took care you should never—."

"Are you raving, Sir?" said the matron, casting a prohibitory look at her brother, and now alarmed at the near prospect of being detected in her disingenuous conduct towards her daughter.

“ *Me raving?*”

“ Yes, one would think so, indeed ! But your strange and inconsistent conduct is all attributable to your want of knowledge of the world ; and a deficiency of tact in matters of such delicacy.”

“ Why, as to the world,” said Crank, marking with a piece of chalk on the floor, the place where Tiller was to screw down the staunchion, to which the foot-clew of Burton’s cot was to be suspended—“ As to the world—I’ve been round that twice ; then as to tacks or tacking, I’d stay where you couldn’t wear :—however, that’s all Algebra to you. But as to opening any sealed dispatches, but my own—hang such *delicacy*, say I.”

The matron felt that a crisis had arrived of such a nature, that it was almost impossible an explanation should not take place, which would put Burton’s conduct in a very different light from that in which it was her interest Emily should view it. Whilst inveighing against the

captain's conduct, as the very height of imprudence, accident liberated her from her embarrassment ; for at this moment the gate-bell rang, and Senna was soon after seen, leading leisurely his patient past the window. The hospitable old hero, growling great guns, bustled immediately out of the room to welcome his guest ; whilst the mother, anxious to prevent the effect any éclaircissement might have on her daughter's feelings, contrived to get between her and the door, and thus addressed her—

“ Emily, my dear love, you will, I hope, feel, that in this instance my conduct has been actuated solely by a mother's anxiety for the welfare of her child. The suppression of the letter may seem disingenuous ; but it was of *such* a nature, that I was induced, through regard to *your* feelings, to conceal its receipt.—Your uncle's unsuspecting artlessness saw nothing in it objectionable ; yet, I assure you, it contained insinuations which I would give the *world*, even now, to be assured had no foundation. If the

letter was penned purposely to throw odium on my child, he could not have been more successful; and if he contemplated the possibility of its falling into my hands, he must be an accomplished villain. I can say no more—time presses—your uncle's absurd obstinacy has entailed his society on us, as a curse.—You are a girl not destitute of understanding—make the best use of it. Be watchful—be vigilant; and remember that the description of the arch-fiend himself, in scripture, is not less applicable to men in quest of fortune, who may be said—‘ to go about like roaring lions, seeking whom they may devour.’ ”

With this piece of advice, enforced by the perversion of a text from scripture, not forgetting the accompaniment of a maternal kiss, as is usual on such occasions, to sweeten the pill of parental advice, she released her daughter; and suddenly assuming a face all smiles, and a manner betokening the deepest interest in the young lieutenant's misfortune, she repaired to the

drawing-room, to welcome, with affected cordiality, the man she most feared and hated on earth.

With the details of that reception, or the effect produced on Burton by the kind heartedness of the old gentleman, by the affected and hypocritical cordiality of the matron, or the quiet, dignified reserve of Emily, we will not fatigue our readers; who are already sufficiently acquainted with their several characters and motives of action, to pourtray these particulars, by the aid of their own imagination, with as much truth and effect as could possibly be accomplished by laboured description.

Days rolled on unmarked, except on the part of Crank, by any thing further than an interchange of mutual distant civilities between the females of the family and the invalid.—He was rapidly recovering the effects of his accident, *yet* no opportunity had been, or seemed likely to be, afforded him, of ascertaining the state of Emily's mind.—He felt himself under the

jealous surveillance of that most effective engine of domestic policy, a wary mother's eye. Without betraying her object, her whole time was devoted to prevent, by every species of fore-thought and caution, the young invalid from having a moment of Emily's society alone.— With this view his bell was answered with an alacrity that surprised him ; every want was supplied as soon as made known ; and it appeared to him not a little singular, that on some of these occasions he could distinguish, by the whispered but authoritative mandate to the servant, when passing her sitting-room, that these attentions were the result of that proud lady's personal regards to his comforts ; a circumstance which not a little tended to shake his previous conviction, that he was no favourite with her, if not absolutely an object of her dislike or aversion. Tiller, also, who was the medium of all those attentions and little assiduities, and whose jealousy of the lieutenant had very much abated, through a feeling of commiseration,

found himself established on a footing of favour, of which, to speak the truth, he had never been ambitious. As, however, he was a fellow of tough principle, and sturdy manner, it never entered Burton's head to make use of him as a confidant ; although he felt it every day became more necessary that he should secure some medium of privately communicating with the object of his hourly encreasing passion. Like other persons in his situation, he was sanguine enough to hope that accident would have thrown such opportunities in his way. In this belief, however, he found himself deceived ; and he now discovered that the maxim was no less true in love than in war—“ He that would win fortune, must woo her.” He therefore sedulously turned his thoughts to procure himself the so much wished-for opportunity as speedily as possible ; more particularly as his rapid convalescence had already furnished, at the dinner-table, a topic with the matron for dexterously, though politely, anticipating his departure from the cottage.

## CHAPTER XII.

## DOMESTIC POLITICS.

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Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike.

POPE.

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HOWEVER prudently the matron had digested her plans, it seemed fated that the good feeling of her brother-in-law, should in this, as in many previous instances, prove a serious obstruction to the attainment of her object.—The worthy man had all along sympathized with his young friend, and seemed now more than ever disposed to enlist the feelings of the female part of his family in his favour.—He so far possessed himself by

snatches of the details of Burton's misfortune as to disabuse himself of his original error in imagining that the lieutenant was, as he had expressed it, 'another Sky-rocket Jack,' blown up in the Bay of Biscay, and landed in a ditch at Dartmouth.—Yet, strange as it may seem, owing to the pleasure he experienced at seeing his young friend under his roof, and being able to render him a service, forty-eight hours had nearly elapsed ere he was undeceived as to his supposed aërial flight to that part of the country.—After dinner, on the day when Mrs. Crank had so pointedly alluded to the probability of the lieutenant's departure from the cottage, the veteran, as was his custom, challenged his friend to a bumper, which was no sooner filled, than he took the young officer kindly by the hand, and said—

"I'll give you a toast.—Here's success to you in your profession, and may you soon hear of your appointment to another ship."

Burton felt himself now called on to express

himself in appropriate and grateful terms, for the kind and hospitable reception he had experienced ; and on this theme, as he really felt much, he perhaps would have been eloquent, had not Crank cut him short, by observing—

“ All that’s very pleasant in its way, my friend, to those who like it—I can’t say *I* do—you’re under no obligation, believe me:—but if you think you are, you may square the yards in this way—by giving us the particulars of the loss of your ship.”

Burton would fain have declined, but his diffidence to speak of a transaction in which he might have said, with *Aeneas*,

“ Quæque ipse miserrime vidi  
Et quorum pars magna fui—”

was soon overcome by Crank’s repeating the request ; and an assurance, false as respected one of the persons alluded to, that ‘ the *women* would be disappointed, as well as himself, unless he began the narration.’

Thus encouraged, he threw off his reluctance to appear egotistical, and proceeded to satisfy their curiosity by a connected detail of the whole transaction ; and there is much reason to regret, both for our own sake, as well as the reader's, that none of the party were sufficiently versed in the stenographic art, to have taken down, in short hand, from his own lips, the animated description of the awful peril, alarm, and distressing hardships endured by himself and his companions on that disastrous occasion ; satisfied we are, that were it in the reader's power to contrast it with that which we have feebly endeavoured to sketch, our meagre prosaic attempt at describing a scene of such animating interest, would have been considered beneath the style of an official dispatch, and scarcely fit for insertion in the ship's log-book.

Had there been no previous *liaison* between two such susceptible minds, as those possessed by our young friends, the history of such sufferings was likely to excite a kindly interest,

which might possibly have warmed into a fonder feeling.—The narrative, from being at first merely circumstantial, became deeply interesting to all, not excepting Mrs. Crank, who, had she calculated on its results, would never have left it in the power of accident to display, in so favourable a light, the character of a man she had so often, through motives of policy, perhaps, rather than ill will, calumniated.

As the story proceeded, the veteran grew restless and fidgetty in his seat, and with difficulty restrained himself from interruption.—Part of the interest was lost on Mrs. Crank, from the anxiety with which she watched the fine expressive features of her daughter, who, like Dido of old, manifested all those alternations of fear, hope, pity, and horror, during this distressing detail, which it is said some thousand years ago (for nature is always the same, and true to itself) agitated the love-lorn Queen of Carthage during *Æneas'* relation of the disastrous conflagration of Troy.—Whatever feelings might

have been excited by this recital in other persons, that which was most decidedly serviceable to the views of the narrator, was the interest which the tale of toil and suffering excited in the old officer's breast.—He made, as the lieutenant proceeded, all the young sailor's sorrows his own, and with an enthusiasm natural to his character, the narrative was scarcely concluded, ere he jumped up from his seat, and strutted about the room with a determined air, that seemed to indicate his mind was made up, and his will should be law.—Then looking alternately in the face of Burton and that of his sister, from whom he almost anticipated open opposition, he exclaimed—

“ Sad work—burnt out—kit lost—no remuneration !\*—perhaps no chance of an appoint-

\* In all cases of shipwreck or loss by fire, the officers and seamen of his majesty's ships are considered as unentitled to remuneration of any kind.—The practice has been complained of as a hardship, but it seems consonant with sound policy.—The conviction of neglect of discipline or precaution, brings its own punishment with it, which is sure to produce the most salutary

ment,"—then grasping him parentally by the hand, he said—“ but never mind—shall never want a friend in distress;—and what's more, my boy, until you get another ship, you shall remain a supernumerary on the *books*, and be victualled at the cottage as long as you like.”

A cloud quickly overshadowed the brow of the stately dame, whose opposition was neutralized by the previous demonstration which Crank had made of his resolution.—An open rupture was to be avoided with a man of the veteran's determination of character; who, wherever his feelings were concerned, usually concluded every argument with the authoritative phrase—“ Recollect—I'm captain of my *own* ship.”

This politic lady, therefore, despairing of accomplishing her object by storm, resolved to

effects.—Officers in the army, on board transports, are sometimes remunerated under similar circumstances, but their safety is in other hands than their own, and they may be considered, when on board ship, as beings completely out of their element.

use a military phrase, to proceed by sap.—The project was no sooner formed, than, with a dexterity highly creditable to her capacity, she proceeded to put part of it into execution, by adopting the line of conduct most likely to deceive her opponent and lull suspicion.—Her plastic features, with admirable facility, assumed a gracious smile; and with all the *savoir* of a woman of the world, who felt acquiescence, however unpalatable, would not be impolitic, added her entreaties to those of her brother, that she hoped he would make his stay as long as suited his convenience and interests: observing, “that it was not likely, however, they should have that pleasure long, as it was impossible a gentleman of his professional character and merit would be suffered to remain unemployed.”

The countenance of the old gentleman seemed to brighten at this observation—perhaps there was as much of triumph in it as of satisfaction; and he was heard to mutter—

“ Changed her tune, by all that’s brave—must

have a heart like a horse if she didn't"—a sentiment, in which, but for the coarseness of the allusion, her daughter would probably have participated.

As in the regular drama the acts are closed by the dropping of the curtain,—the interest of this scene was effectively interrupted by *Mister Tiller*'s intrusion, to drop the curtains for the night, which put an end to the conversation, and curtailed our adventurer's grateful acknowledgments.

Although Mrs. Crank perfectly appreciated the value of her own talents; (as which of us poor mortals do not when we possess them?) as well as of her tact in extricating herself from any difficulty, she was too sensible of the importance of due examination and reflection, not to look into the scheme her genius had promptly furnished her with, in every possible light.—It is not therefore to be wondered at she was extremely taciturn during the rest of the evening, and made indisposition a pretext for retiring

early to rest and breaking up the family party.

For several hours her bed was any thing but a place of repose—

—“ Not poppy, nor mandagora,  
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,”

“ could med’cine” her “ to sweet sleep,” until day-light broke in upon her unfinished lucubrations.

Baffled as she had been in her calculations by the unexpected return of Burton to the neighbourhood, in consequence of the singularly ill-timed accident, which had thrown him, as it were, on their humanity, and the increased probability of his continuing yet longer an inmate of the house ; she felt still greater cause for alarm, at perceiving he was rapidly establishing his claim to her daughter’s esteem, if not affection, through the blind partiality, as she termed it, of her brother-in-law for a poor professional *parvenu*.—In fact, she began to entertain apprehensions that Crank,

whose conduct as to the intercourse between the young people had been hitherto characterised simply by indifference, might allow his predilection for his guest to out-balance the scruples which he entertained, as to the ineligibility of so unequal a match.—There was but one safe course to pursue, more especially as she felt convinced it would be almost impossible that some accident should not apprise her daughter of Burton's last letter being suppressed, which would produce the double effect of raising his character, and depressing her own in Emily's estimation.—To prevent such an *eclaircissement* was her object night and day; yet she was unable to flatter herself that, should he remain in the house, opportunities would not occur for explanation, and exposing the deception practised on her unsuspecting child. With the intrusion of dawn, she had come to the determination that her only chance of safety must consist in expelling this dangerous guest from the house by some *tour-d'artifice* or stratagem:

and ere she had completed her devotional exercises of the morning; or the still more devoutly observed ceremonials of the toilette, she had adjusted the whole plan of operations, and nicely calculated the chances of success.

Although sleep had been altogether a stranger to her pillow, no one who had marked the self-possession and calmness which sat upon her countenance, as she entered the breakfast-room in the morning, would have conjectured that the fever of ambition had, during the live-long night, banished all repose; or that, notwithstanding the air of easy indifference she assumed, she was actually devising how she could ward off, by one piece of duplicity, the consequences of another.—

A favourable opportunity presented itself for the completion of her project; for, immediately after breakfast, Miss Wilson called on her daughter, and both soon after repaired to make some morning calls in the neighbourhood.—Ob-

serving that the coast was clear, and calculating on the usual tediousness of these tiresome testimonials of fashionable regard, she seized the fortunate chance thus afforded of putting her plan into instant execution, and sallied forth — Will it be asked where?

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## CHAPTER XIII.

## SECRET SERVICES.

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He knew not how to reconcile  
Such language, with her usual style,  
And yet her words were so express,  
He could not hope she spoke in jest.

SWIFT.

Here was an honourable compromise,  
A half-way house of diplomatic rest.—

BYRON.

---

THE portly village doctor was busy, pestle in hand, pounding cuttle-fish shell to form a dentifrice for the identical lady who now entered the apartment; which alternately served him as study, surgery, laboratory, and sometimes dissecting-room. Luckily, at this moment, Master

Robert Rufus, his associate in the healing art, was absent: his professional assistance having been solicited by Lady Deborah Outang, in behalf of a sick monkey, whose thread of existence had been considered in great danger from the scissors of *Atropos*; owing, as it was supposed, to a sudden and alarming attack of paralysis.

“ Dear me, doctor,—I consider myself particularly fortunate to find you thus alone,” said Mrs. Crank, who in her hurry had forgotten to close the door by which she entered.

The doctor, after having kindly assisted her to a seat, and returned her greeting, imagining, from her exordium, that one of those mystic communications, not unusual between some patients and their medical men, was on the *tapis*, cautiously crept on tiptoe to the door, which he closed with an affected mysteriousness suited to the occasion—

“ I am obliged, doctor, for this considerate caution. Since the decease of my sainted hus-

band, my affairs are secret to all the world, with the exception of yourself."

A profound bow of acknowledgment followed this complimentary confession.

"Secrecy, my dear Madam, is the soul of the profession; and, let me add,—its safeguard also."

"How admirably expressed!"

"You are pleased to compliment, Madam."

"Impossible!—compliment always implies flattery—your merit challenges commendation."

The opening of this eulogistic battery, or royal salute, seemed for a moment to stagger the doctor. Rubbing his hands with infinite delight, he made a closer approach to the lady's person. He had hitherto considered himself a favourite with her; and in that conviction he had been encouraged by many well-timed condescensions; in most instances slight, but bētokening a preference for his society as a professional man, who understood the value of pliability of character;—a quality which ladies, like his fair

visitant, proportionally prize in others. But this unwonted strain of exaggerated encomium, combined with her secrecy of manner, threw him completely off his guard ; and his anxiety to arrive at the mysterious truth had well nigh involved him in the indiscretion of professionally alluding to a slight obesity of habit, which he had hitherto attributed to sedentary avocations. A leading question, as to the state of her health, was on the tip of his tongue, which would inevitably have damned him for ever in her good opinion ; had not the lady, whose affairs were of too pressing a nature to tolerate either circumlocution or misconstruction, set him right ; and hurried directly to acquaint him with her object.

“ But to address myself to the particular point upon which I wish your advice : you are aware,” continued she, “ of the unfortunate situation in which I’m placed.”

Here the doctor protested his innocence with a face in which it was impossible to say whether incredulity or surprise most predominated.

*That* attachment which you cannot but have suspected—”

“ *Me*, dear Madam,” interrupted Senna, “ never up to this hour.”

“ No ? upon your veracity ?”

“ No, on my honour,” exclaimed the kindling apothecary, “ I assure you. On the respect, on the deep regard let me add, which I trust,” said he, flinging himself from his seat on his knees before her, “ I have uniformly evinced towards you—”

“ Pardon me, doctor,” interrupted the lady, reining in her condescension as she began to be apprehensive that its cause was misunderstood ; “ you appear to labour under a misconception—rise, Sir.”

There were two professional words in the last sentence, which completely set the doctor’s intellects obstetrically wandering. For whom, or to whom the allusion was intended, he still was at a loss ; but having made one capital error, he

was determined not to blunder again, so he patiently waited to take up his cue.

“That *unfortunate* attachment which I always dreaded might result from the growing intimacy of the parties; an intimacy which had happily been interrupted, if not for ever forgotten, but for the absurd obstinacy of that indomitable mon—(but I’ll not use a harsh term) man, Captain C., is more than likely to baffle all my attempts to quench it, unless fresh measures be devised.”

Senna, still at a loss, looked unutterable things, but said not a word.

“All that caution, or prudent concealment”—Here, again, Senna involuntarily started, and seemed relapsing—

“Could do,” resumed the lady, “has been done; but things are now gone too far, unless you kindly assist us.”

Senna, in his mind’s eye, had already taken a retrospective glance over the whole body of pharmacy, or, as it is technically called, the

*Pharmacopœia Londinensis*, for what purpose was best known to himself, then turning round with a face of the most servile obsequiousness, he answered—

“ You know, my dear Madam, you may command my services to any extent.”

“ So I felt confident,” said she ; “ and, to be candid with you, doctor, every thing must now depend on your ingenuity. You know, I’m sure, that these things have been done before.”

“ Oh, constantly, my dear Madam !—every day. Well ; but to come to the point—”

“ Yes,” replied she, but still hesitated to proceed.

“ Would it not be as well,” rejoined the apothecary, “ to apprise me of some of the *leading* symptoms.”

“ Symptoms !—symptoms !” reiterated Mrs. Crank. “ I fear, doctor, you have not comprehended my meaning—explicitness becomes a duty, although delicacy towards my daughter forbids me to disclose her situation. But to

you, as a friend of the family, and who have so often kindly expressed that interest which I am certain you feel in our welfare, I trust I may candidly avow *that*, which, to living being, except yourself, should never have escaped my lips."

Here was fresh food for wonder ; his eyes dilated, his nostrils were distended, and his patulous ears seemed to suck intelligence instinctively, at every syllable as she proceeded.—The lady perceiving, from the sudden alteration of his countenance, that he had already anticipated some unwarrantable inference, as respected her daughter's fair fame, resumed—

“ But mark me ! doctor,—that neither my daughter's conduct nor principles are to be impugned—nor do I imagine, brought up, as she has been, with all the aid of moral and religious instruction, which it has been my pride to infuse from her earliest infancy, that it would be possible she should ever forget what is due to herself and her family.”

This sermonizing tirade was so far from throwing any light upon the person intended to be enlightened, that he fell into a conviction opposite to that which the matron intended should have been the effect of her eloquence: and, as is natural under such circumstances, he now attributed all this circumlocution to an anxiety natural on the part of a parent to palliate a daughter's imprudence.

“ You should, doctor, be apprized—”

A thundering bump at the door, occasioned by the application of the nether extremity of Mister Robert Rufus's person on the outside, in consequence of his finding the latch refused its office, fortunately interrupted the confabulation, which, from its want of point, might otherwise have been carried far enough to fatigue the patience of the reader.

Senna flew from his seat in a passion—and, like the “true blood of Cæsar,” was seen

—“ Rushing out of doors, to be resolved  
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd or no :”

and in the eagerness of the one to intrude, and the other to repel the invasion, their heads came slap in collision with a force, which, had the *os frontis* of either been less strongly fortified by nature, or the cerebral matter of a more tender and susceptible substance, might have afforded an opportunity to the other practitioner of trepanning the sufferer's skull, and in the attempt perhaps "eased" him, to speak poetically, "of this load of life."

This interruption recalled the interlocutors to a sense of the value of fleeting time, and of the probability that the thread of their communion might be again equally unseasonably broken off. As soon, therefore, as the luckless wight had been despatched by Senna with a reprimand, Mrs. Crank, dismissing the small remnant of *mauvaise honte* which lingered in her nature, proceeded, in a more business-like manner, to state the reasons of her visit, and detail, in a connected chain, the symptoms (as Mr. Senna, she observed, would have called them) of ap

proaching disorder in the family body. For she, conformably with her peculiar system of action (founded on what are termed approved worldly maxims), had always considered and treated love as a species of contagion—if not the plague itself. Dissenting from the enlightened *medico-philosophers* of the day, who have alarmed the southern maritime states of Europe by the innovating principle that the plague is not contagious; her principle of action was diametrically opposite, from entertaining the firm conviction and belief, that as no attachment could take place between parties without coming in collision, so the contagion, however violent, must cease to propagate itself, and finally be extirpated, provided the enamoured pair were carefully removed from the possibility of coming into future contact. From the symptoms enumerated, she was compelled to admit, that, as respected her daughter, these were not of so decided a character; though she was rather disposed to attribute their being checked, to her

own judicious method of treating them in their early stage:—whilst she regretted, in terms of deep anxiety and alarm, that the disease displayed itself with a virulence and violence in the male subject, which threatened infection in its worst shape; and bid fair to defeat all her anxious precaution.

Senna protested, and possibly with truth, that never during his experience had he witnessed a similar instance of so judicious an adaptation of physical terms to metaphysical subjects; and concluded his warm compliment to her talent by observing, that she had succeeded in that most difficult of all oratorical attempts, which consisted in making the figures she had so judiciously selected at once illuminative and corroborative of her facts. “But,” continued the professor of physic, “having now, Madam, got over what we consider the main point, the *nomination* of the disease—the next step is to prescribe a remedy.”

“There, doctor, you must allow me to in-

trude on your prerogative. What that remedy is, *I* have, upon the most mature deliberation, resolved."

"Just so; and, give me leave to say, in excellent hands."

"To be brief, then. There is every reason to believe, that the unhappy interest which this young man has excited in my brother, both as a professional man, as well as from his late sufferings and accident, will be the means of prolonging his stay, and affording him opportunities of interesting my daughter still more strongly in his favour. You know the value of the proverb—‘Opportunity and importunity.’"

"Just so."

"One thing at least is certain, that, beggared as he now is, we shall be saddled with him perhaps for months; for only yesterday, after the recital of his sufferings at sea, which certainly were, if *true*, rather singular and touching—our perverse but kind friend, *sailor-like*,

thought himself called on to offer him an asylum without limitation of time;—in fact, a *carte blanche* to do as he thought proper, and remain as long as he liked."

"You *don't* say so?"

"Your surprise, doctor, is natural. But such is the fact. Now, this, Sir, I never can endure. It would be a wanton exposure of my dear child to the chance of forming a connexion highly ineligible—in fact, ruinous to her expectations. Only think, my good friend, of such a calamity befalling a girl so calculated to succeed in life as she is by nature; and highly cultivated, as I trust she is, by all the ordinary aids of education and a mother's fond solicitude. It is not to be thought of with any thing like patience. —Flight alone can save us; and resolved I am, that, great as the sacrifice might perhaps be, were my brother to take umbrage at it, my daughter and I, as a last resort, must withdraw ourselves from his roof."

“ God forbid, my dear friend !—to be sure, violent diseases require violent remedies. Yet, perhaps, an *alternative* might be administered with success.”

“ You will excuse me—I feel as a mother, and cannot temporise with my solicitude.—Vigorous measures alone can preserve us—and you have assured me of your kind co-operation.”

Again the doctor was destined to be at fault.—But as the innuendo was dreadful and appalling, prudence prompted him to be silent.

“ Upon your dexterity and skill, as a professional man, and a man of the world, I implicitly rely.—It is in your power and *your's* only, to remove him !”

The colour deserted every feature of the doctor's bewildered countenance.—He positively gasped for breath at the conclusion of this speech ; during which he had been calculating with himself what might be her ultimate aim : But this ambiguous proposal, coupled with the urgency of her preceding appeal, made him

doubt whether he had the perfect possession of his faculties.

The speaker was now too much excited, and too anxious to arrive at her object, to permit him to remain much longer in doubt.

“ You know,” continued she, “ how much attached he is to the cottage.”

“ *Who*, my dear Madam?”

“ Why, surely, you have not been all along ignorant whom I meant—my brother.”

“ Impossible!—I trust—”

“ Why not?” interrupted the matron. “ Unless under the impression of a dangerous state of health, and the necessity of trying some other air, I fear it will be impossible to remove him—and even this must be managed with great dexterity—and by-the-by, doctor (I only throw out the conjecture), do you not think he breaks apace?”

“ Quite the contrary—I have not seen him look better for years—nor is his improvement

confined to looks alone.—His constitution seems renovated, and he perfectly astonished me by the alacrity with which he bustled down here the day of Mr. Burton's accident."

" Appearances may be deceitful—I have nearer opportunities of observing him than you—not that I would impeach your professional skill, for which I have the highest respect—but from certain appearances,—*minute* certainly, and almost indescribable; I venture to give it as my decisive opinion, that he is on the eve of some important change for the worst."

" I confess my observations lead me to a different inference—more particularly as he has been taking the '*preventive drops.*' "

" Of drops, or of medicine, I have little hope—perhaps, already he has taken too much.—Change of air,—change of scene, doctor, seems most likely to accomplish our object."

" Oh!" drawled out the doctor, with unaffected surprise, as if awakening from a dream—" I now, for the first time, perceive your drift—

pardon the phrase—I should rather have said—the a—purport of your first a—intentions.”

“ Well, excuse me,—but from your doubtful manner, it appeared to me that *this* was not one of your *bright* mornings.—But to resume,—don’t you think it would be adviseable to order him to Bath, or say Cheltenham—it is a matter perhaps of indifference—change of scene being of as much consequence as any thing else in this instance ?”

“ Why—wh—y a—as to the policy of the *thing*, I don’t dispute it may be necessary—but I should rather the suggestion came from any *one* else.—You’ll please to recollect, my good Madam, that professional *reputation* is something with the world—to me everything—I flatter myself *my* treatment has been judicious, and, give me leave to add, eminently successful—considering his habits of life.”

“ All that, my dear Sir, we don’t dispute.”

“ I feel your kindness in that admission—But you must be aware of the effect *my* giving him

up will create abroad—its unfavourable impression as to my skill—and that, too, at the moment when he is on the eve of a cure.—It was only the other day he was proposing to remove the bandage from his leg, alleging he felt it unnecessary. But *I*, as a matter of *pure* precaution, could not possibly listen to it—Besides—this would be to relinquish a triumph into the hands of the next medical man he may consult, who will thus avail himself of all the judicious treatment which I have so long practised, with almost a certain hope of completely renovating his constitution.—See, Madam ! the sacrifice I must thus make, both as to the gratitude which he must feel he owes me for my exertions, and the still more important sacrifice of my professional reputation: which latter is the greater, from the very circumstance of recommending a change of air:—which, you yourself are well aware, the world now very uncharitably begins to consider the surest symptom of a medical man's *despair* of his patient; and an inhuman abandonment of

him to his fate, as though death were inevitable.—You, Madam, can see no reason ; at least, I see none, strong enough to induce me so wantonly to sacrifice reputation.”

“ Oh ! certainly, by no means.”

“ Yet,” continued the doctor, rising in tone as well as in importance of manner, as if warmed by his own eloquence, “ character is coin.—Besides, there is something due to the feelings of the old gentleman—what will he think of being so unceremoniously handed over to strangers ? Did my practice permit it, or could my other patients be *reconciled* to my absence, I might, by accompanying him, remove some of the objections.—Then—Will *he* submit to the treatment of strangers, with all the reluctance he has manifested to medicine, and his contempt of professional advice ? The difficulties I have experienced in this respect, have, as you well know, Madam, only been overcome by his considering me, for some time past, more in the light of a friend, than a physician.—But, above all, should

he detect, or but suspect the imposition practised on him; it is pretty evident I shall forfeit for ever his good opinion and confidence."

"All you have said, Sir," said Mrs. Crank, with a smile; which was half of a sneer, "is very plausible; and I properly appreciate your tenderness for Captain Crank's feelings.—But I imagine it will not be difficult to calm all that amiable anxiety you have expressed for him,—by one word, and in thus alluding to it *now* distinctly, it will save me the trouble, and you the embarrassment, of its being *again* rung in your ears—which is, that whatever *sacrifice* you may imagine you make, in relinquishing the captain as a patient, shall be amply remunerated, I give you my solemn assurance.—And now, Sir, it remains for you to decide—and it is only candid to apprise you, that the decision will be important as well to your own interests as to ours—for taking a high authority in this instance as my guide, I shall determine—'he that is not *for* us, is *against* us.' "

The dreams of an armed neutrality, in which the doctor had hugged himself, were by this talismanic touch of female artifice dissipated into “thin air.” As a man, who had entrenched himself in a strong hold, which he hitherto imagined impregnable, surrenders at discretion, the moment he is surprised by finding the enemy in the citadel; so the pharmacopolist, who had fortified himself in professions of feeling, and flourishes of declamation, which he supposed were insurmountable; the moment he became apprehensive that his interest was at stake, wisely determined to beat the *chamade*, and capitulate in time, ere matters came to extremities.

“ Well, my dear Madam, it must be confessed it’s a *case* of difficulty—but we must see what can be done. I consent to postpone a—my interests—your’s shall be—a—paramount;—and, give me leave to add, the sacrifice is the more meritorious, as your assurances, however kindly meant, have certainly been but obscurely defined:—

on your present assurance, I shall, however, implicitly rely."

With an address worthy of the best days of Italian diplomacy, the lady simpered, and affected a slight confusion ; expressing, in a softened voice, her surprise at his not perceiving that, circumstanced as she was, *delicacy* must prevent her being more explicit.

Cerberus himself was never taken with so palatable a sop :—The victory was complete ; and the man was her own, *body and soul*.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## AN EXPLANATION.

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They were alone once more.

BYRON.

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It has become an adage in human affairs that “man proposes, Heaven disposes”—a truism so general, that it embraced even the case of Mrs. Crank, although a *female*—for while she was thus providing against possible future ill, that occurrence which it had been all along an object nearest her heart to prevent, actually took place.

In consequence of not finding at home the greater number of those acquaintances on whom she called, Emily having parted with her friend

near that lady's residence, returned earlier than by her vigilant mother had been expected ; and had sat herself down in the drawing-room, when the lieutenant entered, pleasure beaming in his eye ; the result of those hopes and anticipations which now “thick fluttered” round his heart. This was the first time he had, since his abode at the cottage, seen Emily alone, even for a moment ; and as it was naturally to be expected that such an occurrence should long since have taken place by accident, he began to imagine that the interdiction of her society in private must be the result of design ; although still rather dubious as to its author. He had, however, calculated on the opportunity certainly occurring within a much shorter period than that which had elapsed since his stay ; and, as is natural, under circumstances where a much desired event is unaccountably postponed, he considered the chance daily improved, until he now felt convinced it approximated to certainty. As he was unconscious of any slight towards the object of his affections, he

felt more sensibly the value of an opportunity of an explanation, which might, he trusted, remove that reserve which marked her conduct towards him ; and restore that happier intimacy and friendly cordiality which formerly subsisted between them. It was not wonderful, therefore, that every day which intervened seemed too short, because it afforded no such opportunity : whilst, as he added it to the number of those already spent in doubt and anxiety since becoming an inmate at the cottage, the aggregate of time appeared to him intolerably long and tedious.

It may easily be conceived that, in this situation of mind, the lieutenant was not disposed to let the present opportunity be lost. Notwithstanding the anxiety he felt to put an end to these perplexities, yet now, when alone with the woman he adored, he found the task of attempting an explanation fraught with difficulties he had never before attributed to it. There seems to be a busy demon ever in the path of lovers,

even of the purer order;—and possibly more frequently with such persons than with spirits of less exalted sentiment, whose constant office it is to create misunderstandings which should never have arisen between rational beings, to conjure up those tormenting and unappeasable sensations, which arise from too scrupulous an exactation of attention, too refined an idea of human nature, or too subtle and intrusive a feeling of self-respect. Of these three just mentioned, women appear to be haunted by the two former; whilst the last, which, by-the-bye, like all other sensations founded on self, is the more difficult to overcome, starts up like a spectre to scare the male sentimentalist from his object; and render him the victim of his own overweening refinement. On this rock (to change the figure, since Burton was not an immaterialist) he found himself most likely to strike; in consequence of entertaining an idea, that were he the first to demand or entreat an explanation, it might be thence inferred that he felt conscious

something in his conduct had occasioned that reserve which he so much regretted. Never, perhaps, had this intermeddling spirit been more effectively busied in disturbing the good understanding and harmony which subsisted between two persons, who previously esteemed each other, than in the present instance. One difficulty, which, however, had been considered insurmountable, and that too with reason, was removed, and both parties had now an opportunity of communicating freely and explaining their sentiments without the intervention of a third person. The next difficulty to be removed was, who should concede the point, and begin the explanation, which, between two persons who separately felt they had nothing wherewith to upbraid themselves, was one of rather difficult adjustment. In the middle of deliberations of this nature the clock struck 'four,' and the last stroke of the bell awoke him to a sense of the value of those moments he was thus wasting in subtle and futile casuistry, and reminded him

that the summons for dinner might be momentarily expected. He felt the importance of this opportunity for explanation—his scruples were overbalanced by his anxiety. By singular good fortune he happened to touch accidentally the magic spring, which was certain to open a road from that labyrinth in which he was involved.

“May I ask,” said he, “to what am I indebted for the pleasure of now, for the first time during so long a residence in this house, enjoying *one* moment of your society alone?”

“I was not,” replied Emily, with dignified reserve, “aware that such an opportunity would be particularly prized by Mr. Burton.”

“This is indeed injustice. The value I have set on every moment I have enjoyed of your society, may best be estimated by the solicitude I have always shewn to obtain it.”

“I must be excused,” said Emily, “if I think it very doubtful that solicitude still exists.”

“Good heavens!” said he, “what can you

mean? In what part of my conduct have I merited that reproach? An explanation is of the utmost importance to my peace of mind: can you harbour any suspicion of the sincerity of my attachment?"

"It is not my wish, Sir, nor ever has been my habit to take up lightly any suspicion as to those I esteem."

"For that admission I feel deeply grateful," said he, interrupting the unfinished sentence, which she recommenced thus,—

"But having admitted this, you cannot but be aware, there are circumstances connected with your abrupt departure for sea, which might have appeared to require some explanation. That occasion is very likely forgotten; and, as respects myself, it would perhaps be as well it continued so."

"It is," replied he, "as fresh in my recollection as every other circumstance in the slightest degree connected with you. I however had hoped my letter would have induced you to accept my

explanation of my rather singular and abrupt retreat that evening."

"That letter," said the blushing girl, with something like disdain mingled with confusion in her manner, "it would have been more to your own honour, as I have been assured, had it never been written."

"Then you have been deceived," said the indignant lieutenant, "*grossly* deceived. It contained only an apology, couched in the most respectful terms a grateful heart could dictate. Never! oh, never could I be base enough to insult the woman I adore. My soul scorns the imputation: and, depend on it, lovely Emily, both that note, and the long letter I wrote you, when at sea, were effusions worthy of the most honourable and ardent attachment."

"What letter?" said she with an eagerness of manner which absolved her from all possible suspicion of affecting a surprise she did not feel.

“I know of no letter ever received from you at sea.”

“Then, without doubt, both have been intercepted,” said he, “and, probably, by the same hand. Ought I to wonder at your coldness? I must, indeed, have appeared to merit your deep displeasure. How have we both been deceived!”

A flood of light broke in on Emily’s mind; the supposed detected clandestine correspondence, alluded to by her uncle; her mother’s jealous vigilance; Burton’s deep melancholy; were all accounted for. She was now in the road to acquire more accurate information. Burton was relieved from the odium under which he had so long, and so undeservedly laboured; and although the *tête-à-tête* was disturbed by the announcement of dinner, ere he had an opportunity of detailing all the contents of the suppressed correspondence, he failed not to acquaint her with details enough to re-instate himself in her favour, and

embolden him, ere he left the apartment, to snatch her hand to his lips—a regale which, it is not improbable, had more relish for him, than all the more substantial luxuries that awaited him in the dining-room.

END OF VOL. II.

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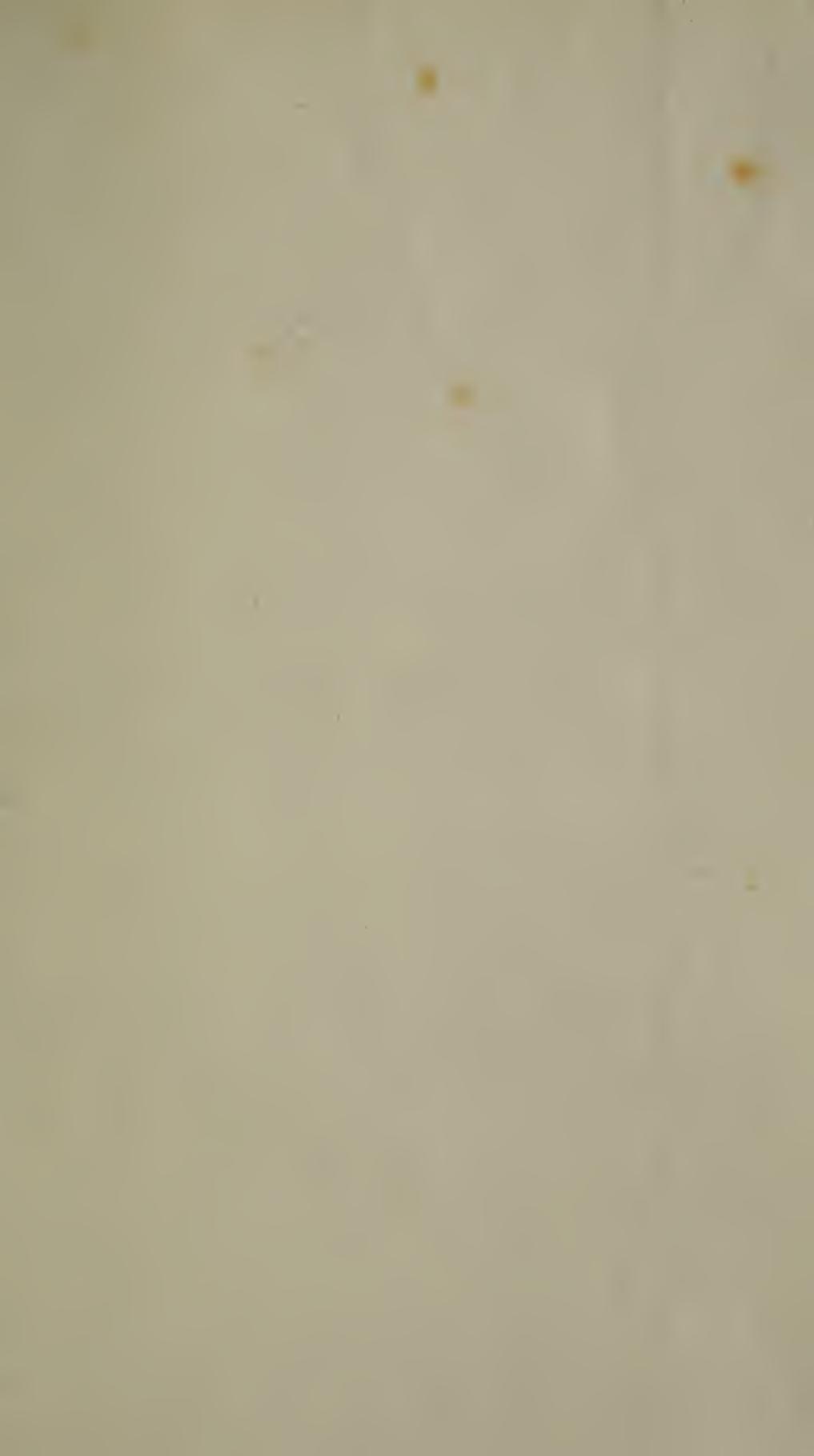


















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